LONDON MISSION

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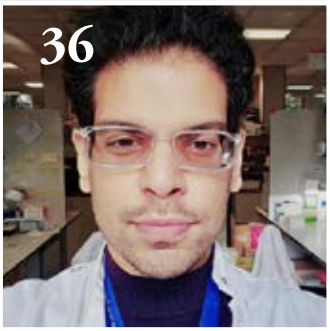

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TRIBUTE BY HER EXCELLENCY CHRISTINE KANGALOO TO THE LATE FORMER PRIME MINISTER BASDEO PANDAY

When Basdeo Panday passed from this life on the 1st of January 2024, Trinidad and Tobago lost more than just its 5th Prime Minister. We lost one of the largest and most colourful figures in the modern history of the Caribbean. We lost a man who blazed a trail like few others before him ever had, and like few others ever will again.

We lost a feisty fighter, who faced every battle head-on: winning some and losing some along the way; at times hurting his opponents; at times, hurting himself. We lost a man who yielded no ground during his 90 years. We lost a man who lived his life to the fullest and who, in the course of doing so, set the national landscape on fire.

Her Excellency Christine Kangaloo, President of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago delivers the Tribute at the State Funeral of Former Prime Minister of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago Basdeo Panday, **Photo: otp.tt**

From Princes Town to Port of Spain; from Couva North to the Caribbean; from the Bahamas in the North to Guyana in the South – Basdeo Panday was a man who fascinated a region with his charm and enthralled a nation with his wit. Mind you – that wit could turn from delightfully charming to devastatingly caustic at the drop of a hat; something that I observed first-hand when I sat across the floor from him in Parliament during the period 2007 to 2010. During that period – in what turned out to be the sunset years of his political career – he would, on the occasions when he was not waxing lyrical in the course of a contribution, often sit with his head buried in a book, never looking up, almost daring those on the opposite side to interfere with his peace. Woe betide the unsuspecting soul who dared to do so. We all learned early on not to trouble the Lion when he was at rest. And, even though the Lion has now entered into another state of rest, many of us who learned that lesson were so traumatised that, to today, we remain a little apprehensive about saying anything even remotely critical of him, lest we awaken his ire once more!

Basdeo Panday certainly had enough people who were critical of him during his lifetime. He had his fair share of detractors. That is hardly surprising. As a meteor blazes its trail across the sky, it burns everything that is in its path, because that is the nature of a meteor's existence. And, since Basdeo Panday was one of the brightest meteors in the country's galaxy, it would not be surprising if, in his wake, he burnt bridges at times. But Basdeo Panday also had at his side, his friends with whom he built indestructible bridges and long and lasting relationships; and his family, whom he loved more than life itself. Doubtless, it was they who gave him strength when the days grew dark, as sometimes they did, even in his colourfully brilliant life. I remember when Basdeo Panday first impressed himself unto my consciousness. And I remember what impressed me then, the most about him.

The year was 1984. My brother Wendell has just been called to the Bar, and my father had called together a few of his friends to a celebration at our home in St. Joseph Village, to mark the occasion. Basdeo Panday was among those friends. What most impressed me about him that evening, was not his legendary charm or his delightful wit. What struck me the most about him, was that he was a man completely and utterly in love with life. He and his beloved Oma danced the evening away with complete abandon, moving to the music in a way that even then, in my youth, it was difficult for me and my friends to match. He was to show that same energy, and some of those very dance moves, almost 40 years later when he mounted the stage at Brian Lara's All-Inclusive Carnival Party recently, to the utter delight of an adoring audience. His energy was as infectious then as it had been at Wendell's party, and it dawned on me that evening that here was someone who understood and who practised the art of the moment – of giving oneself completely to the present moment, unburdened by a past – which can never be changed, and unafraid of a future – which can never be held.

What also struck me about him that evening at Wendell's party was the love that he had for his wife, Oma – a love that endured until his dying day. In later years, I would look on, in quiet admiration, at how that love was shared among his family, and especially with his daughters – Niala, Mickela, Nicola and Vastala. Trinidad and Tobago has been lucky enough to witness regular demonstrations of his relationship with Mickela, with whom in later years he would often attend official events. Every time I saw a picture of him and Mickela, I would think to myself what an example he was to fathers everywhere. How I wish that our country's fathers would model and emulate their closeness. What the nation saw between him and Mickela in public, is what every member of his family felt, away from the public glare. We need to remember that Basdeo Panday was not only a public figure, but that he had an immensely meaningful private life. His family has lost their North Star.

To read the full speech, please visit: https://otp.tt/tribute-to-the-late-former-prime-minister-basdeo-panday-at-his-state-funeral/

TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO PAYS TRIBUTE TO THE LATE FORMER PRIME MINISTER BASDEO PANDAY

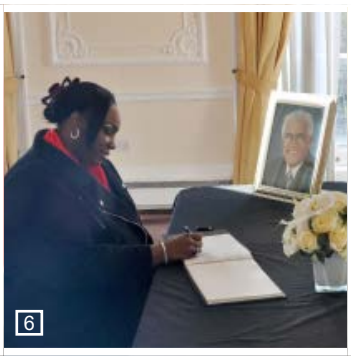
Above: 1) Trinidad and Tobago Defence Force pall bearers carry the casket with the body of Mr Basdeo Panday, **3)** Government Ministers, and Members of Parliament were in attendence, **2)** Prime Minister Dr the Honourable Keith Rowley and Mrs Sharon Rowley attending the State Funeral of Former Prime Minister of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago Basdeo Panday**. Photo: opm.tt**

Below: 4) The National Flag of Trinidad and Tobago was flown at half-mast from 2 January 2024 to 9 January 2024, as a sign of respect, on the passing of the former Prime Minister of Trinidad and Tobago, Mr. Basdeo Panday, at all Government buildings and Trinidad and Tobago diplomatic missions including the High Commission of Trinidad and Tobago in London. **4-6)** Minister Zhao Fei, Chinese Embassy, Her Excellecny Racher Croney, High Commissioner for Grenada, and Mrs Isabella Birbal signs the Condolence Book.

Prime Minister Dr. the Honourable Keith Rowley and Mrs Sharon Rowley attended the State Funeral of Former Prime Minister of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago Basdeo Panday held at the Southern Academy for the Performing Arts in San Fernando on Tuesday 9 January 2024.

The funeral proceedings were conducted in accordance with Hindu rites. Family, friends, colleagues, religious leaders and well-wishers were invited to pay their respects and join in remembrance.

President of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, Christine Kangaloo ORTT; The Hon Chief Justice, Mr Justice Ivor Archie; The Speaker of the House of Representatives, the Honourable Bridgid Annisette-George, Senate President, the Honourable Nigel de Freitas, several Government Ministers, and Members of Parliament were in attendence.



THE MISSION WELCOMES NEW IMMIGRATION ATTACHÉS

In February 2024, Mr. Raymond Butler, Immigration Officer IV joined the High Commission, London and assumed duties as the High Commission's Immigration Attaché. Mr Butler has over twenty years experience in the Public Service.

Similarly, in February 2024, Mr. Jermaine Pascall, an Immigration Officer III, assumed duties as the High Commission's Immigration Attaché. Mr. Pascall brings with him over twenty years of experience in the Public Service.

The High Commission warmly welcomes Mr. Raymond Butler and Mr. Jermaine Pascall and is confident that their stewardship will lead to an enhanced capacity of the Immigration and Passport department.

The High Commission also bid farewell to Ms Helena Jackson former Immigration Attaché. We thank her for her service and wish her the very best in her future endeavours!

From Top: Immigration Attachés Mr. Raymond Butler and Mr. Jermaine Pascall

RAMESHWARAM HINDU, SOCIAL AND CULTURAL ORGANISATION CELEBRATES MAKAR SANKRANTI PUJA

On January 14, 2024, the Rameshwaram Hindu, Social and Cultural Organization (Rameshwaram Mandir UK) marked the commencement of the new year with their first Puja at the Yeading Community Centre in London.

Rameshwaram Mandir UK stands out as one of the few Caribbean Hindu organizations, led by the UK-based Pundit, Pt Rajneesh Tulsi-Ramprashad, from Trinidad and Tobago. The organization is dedicated to the preservation, education, and facilitation of a conducive environment for Trinibagonian and, by extension, Caribbean Hindus to engage in worship and social activities.

In attendance at this significant event was Ms. Urvashi Ramnarine, Minister Counsellor, providing a valuable opportunity to connect with the Trinidad and Tobago Diaspora. The occasion not only served as a religious ceremony but also as a platform for fostering community and cultural ties among the Caribbean Hindu population in the UK.

Top: Pundit, Pt Rajneesh Tulsi-Ramprashad (4th from right) leds the Rameshwaram Mandir's Puja and Makar Sankranti celebrations.

At right: Dancers Fidel Persaud and his daughter Chandani Persaud

Photo: Rameshwaram Mandir UK

COMMONWEALTH COMMEMORATES 75 YEARS

Pictured: 1) Trinidad and Tobago flag among flags of the Commonwealth in Parliament Square, London.,**2)** The Commonwealth Flagbearer Ms Maya Kirti Nanan, Commonwealth Young Person of the Year 2023, **Photos: The Commonwealth, 3)** (far right) Ms. Jovanna Maharaj, Trinidad and Tobago's Flagbearer, stands alongside other flag bearers representing various Caribbean nations during the Commonwealth Day service. **Photo: Jovanna Maharaj**

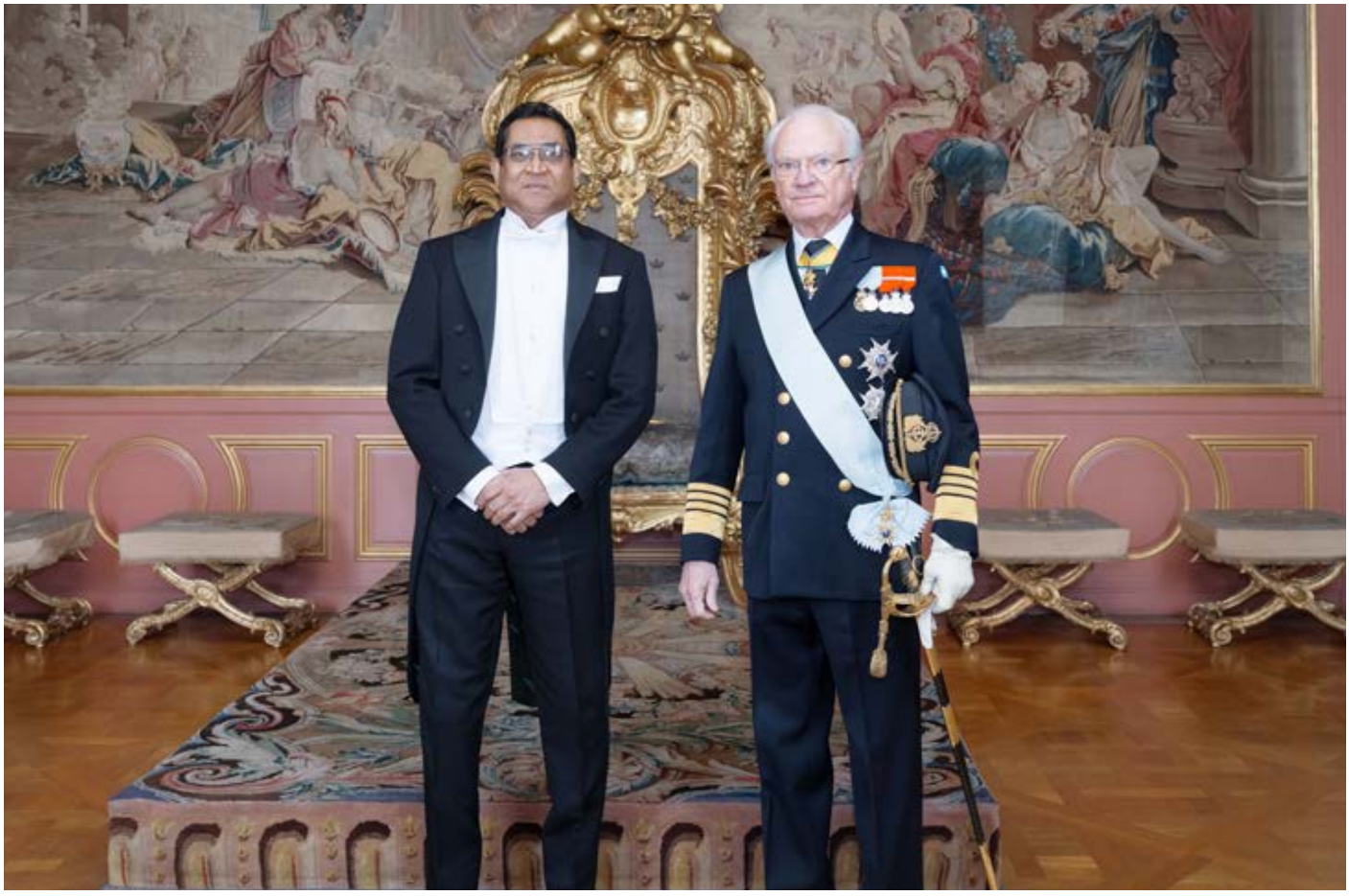
Commonwealth Day 2024 was celebrated on Monday 11 March 2024, with a multicultural and multi-faith service at Westminster Abbey, London. The service commemorated 75 years since the founding of the modern Commonwealth, under the theme 'One Resilient Common Future'.

Representing Trinidad and Tobago were High Commissioner Vishnu Dhanpaul and Flagbearer Ms. Jovanna Maharaj, a national high achiever. Additionally, Ms. Maya Kirti Nanan, another Trinidad and Tobago national, had the honour of being the Commonwealth flag bearer at the celebration. Ms Nanan holds the prestigious title of Commonwealth Young Person of the Year 2023/4.

During the Commonwealth Day Service, King Charles, in his role as Head of the Commonwealth, emphasized the importance of unity and collaboration. He stated, “Together and individually, we are strengthened by sharing perspectives and experiences, and by offering and borrowing the myriad ways we have each tackled the challenges of our time. This is true both at the level of nations and, indeed, at the local level”. The service was attended by The Queen, The Prince of Wales, and other members of the Royal Family.

At left: H.E. Vishnu Dhanpaul with Flagbearer Ms. Jovanna Maharaj, **Photo: Jovanna Maharaj**

AMBASSADOR DHANPAUL PRESENTS CREDENTIALS IN SWEDEN



Above: His Excellency Vishnu Dhanpaul with His Majesty Carl XVI Gustaf, King of Sweden after presenting the Letters of Credence**; Below:** H.E. Vishnu Dhanpaul with members of King of Sweden palace and Ambassador Veronika Bard, Marshal of the Diplomatic Corps (fourth from right), **Photos: Protocol MFA of Kingdom of Sweden**

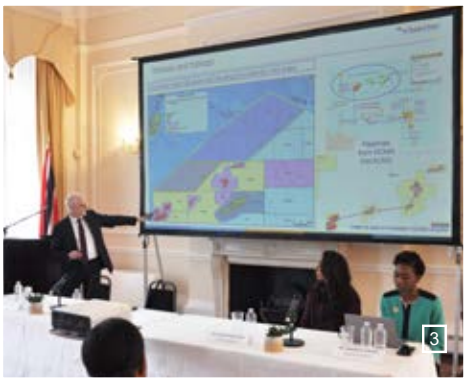
On 21 March 2024 Ambassador Vishnu Dhanpaul presented his Letters of Credence to His Majesty Carl XVI Gustaf King of Sweden, accrediting him as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago to Sweden. The presentation took place during a private audience at the Royal Palace in Gamla Stan, Stockholm, Sweden.

During the meeting High Commissioner Dhanpaul engaged in brief conversation with the King of Sweden regarding Trinidad and Tobago's relationship with Sweden. At the end of the Credentials Ceremony, High Commission Dhanpaul signed the Visitors' Book.

Trinidad and Tobago and Sweden established diplomatic relations in July 1966. Since that time, Sweden has been involved in a number of development projects, including the Point Lisas Housing and Urban Development Programme, the Ferry Service between Port of Spain and Scarborough and Administrative Improvement in the Public Service.

The High Commissioner is also the Ambassador for the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago to the Federal Republic of Germany, the Republic of Finland and the Kingdoms of Sweden, Norway and Denmark.

UK ROADSHOW FOR TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO'S 2023/2024 SHALLOW WATER COMPETITIVE BIDDING ROUND



Pictured: 1) (L-R) Mrs. Adanna Taylor, Commerical Officer, His Excellency Vishnu Dhanpaul, Mrs. Penelope Bradshaw Niles, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Energy and Energy Industries, Ms. Kimberlee London, Senior Geologist (Ag), Ms. Maryse Jackman, Geoscientist, **2)** Ms Sunita Ramjattan, State Counsel, **3)** Mr. Neil Hodgson, VP Geoscience, Searcher Seismic, **4-6)** Various representatives raised points during the Question and Answer segment.

The Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago invited stakeholders' participation in its Shallow Water Competitive Bidding Round 2023. This bid round contains thirteen (13) offshore blocks located along the western, eastern, southern and northern coasts of Trinidad and Tobago respectively.

The Shallow Water Competitive Bid Round was opened on 3 October 2023 with the deadline for submission of bids being 12 noon on 27 May 2024. Successful bids will be announced four (4) months following the close of bidding.

The Ministry of Energy and Energy Industries (MEEI) organised a Roadshow at the High Commission for Trinidad and Tobago in the UK on 25 March 2024 and featured presentations by the Ministry's Bid Round Team, led by Permanent Secretary Mrs. Penelope Bradshaw-Niles. Attendees had the opportunity to engage with the team during the Q&A session and schedule one-on-one meetings afterward.

Pictured: Mrs. Penelope Bradshaw Niles speaking with representatives during the morning break.

Additionally, the MEEI team represented Trinidad and Tobago at the AAPG/ GESGB Business and Exploration Opportunities Show 2024 on 26 and 27 March 2025 at the Business Design Centre in Islington.

NATIONALS MEETING – MAY

His Excellency Vishnu Dhanpaul, High Commissioner, welcomed nationals on 5 July 2024 to a very lively and dynamic Nationals Meeting.

The session featured key presentations, including Trade and Investment Opportunities by Ms Adanna K. Taylor, Commercial Officer; Consular Matters by Ms Urvashi Ramnarine, Minister Counsellor; and Immigration Matters by Mr Raymond Butler, Immigration Officer IV.

Nationals engaged in a dynamic question-an d-answer segment, raising pertinent issues and sharing insights on matters affecting the diaspora.

The High Commissioner expressed gratitude to all who attended and contributed to the discussions.

1) Ms Adanna K. Taylor, Commercial Officer, **2)** Ms Urvashi Ramnarine, Minister Counsellor **3)** Mr Raymond Butler, Immigration Officer IV, **4-7)** A cross section of the nationals who raised points during the Nationals' Meeting Question and Answer segment, **8)** Natalie Mattias and one of the many nationals who supported her charity Tree Behold.

Trinidad and Tobago Nationals, Register Today! *Simply scan the QR code or visit:* ***bit.ly/tt-nationals-registration*** *to download the National Registration form, complete it and submit to us.*

Our main goal is to use this information to update you on upcoming events and important topics for people living in the UK and other accredited countries. Your participation matters!

TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO'S CULTURE AND ANGOSTURA RUM CELEBRATED AT THE ROYAL OVER-SEAS LEAGUE IN LONDON

Trinidad and Tobago was represented at the Young Diplomats in London charity event on Saturday 11th May 2024 at the Kensington Town Hall in London. The event was organized by the Young Diplomats of London in association with the Kuwaiti Embassy and Ambassador Bader Al-Awadi and supported by the Mayor of Kensington and Chelsea Preety Hudd.

The event entitled "Weaving International Fashion" was an opportunity for seventeen High Commissions and Embassies to present their countries through fashion, handicrafts, food and tourism.

Pictured: Pictured: Ms. Simone Ramdeen showcasing Mahogany Carnival Arts' costume, *Spirit of Carnival – Land of Celebration and Joy.*

All proceeds from the show were donated to two charities – The Felix Project and Kids for Kids.

Congratulations to Clary Salandy, renowned costume designer at Mahogany Carnival Arts, and her team for providing the carnival costume which closed the show to the delight of everyone present. The costume was designed by Clary Salandy and worn by Simone Ramdeen. Technical assistants included Stephen Ramdeen and Christopher Ramdeen.

The costume entitled *Spirit of Carnival - Land of Celebration and Joy* is an angel of faith and she brings the spirit of carnival to life. According to Ms. Salandy the costume "is a joyous celebration of the spirit of the beautiful islands of Trinidad and Tobago. We are forged from the love of liberty. Our wings are a symbol of freedom as they reach up into the space between heaven and earth.

These Wings of blue and gold reflect the warmth and natural beauty of our islands. We are blessed by the light of the world, the sun, golden sands and the turquoise sea that links Trinidad and Tobago as islands of the blue Caribbean Sea.

The vivid colours of the skirt are a tribute to our rich cultural diversity where every creed and race finds an equal place. This is one garment of many colours depicting the togetherness and unity of all cultures in Trinidad and Tobago. The colour red is the love of the people for the islands and for each other. It is the inner strength, the heartbeat, that runs through the veins of our nation as we strive for prosperity and live in harmony."

Pictured : 1) Mr Taiwo Paul Meghoma, Fashion Director, **2) (L-R)** Councillor Preety Hudd, Mayor of the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea, His Excellency Mr. Bader Mohammad E Alwadi, the Ambassador of the State of Kuwait to the United Kingdom, Mr Taiwo Paul Meghoma, Fashion Director, Mrs Unurmaa Janchiv, Honourary Cultural Envoy Mongolia to the UK, **3)** Mr Christopher Ramdeen, Mrs Clary Salandy, Ms Simone Ramdeen, Ms Urvashi Ramnarine, Minister Consellor, (4th from right), Mrs Beverley Awonaya, Public Affairs Culture and Tourism.

TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO WRITER WINS CARIBBEAN PRIZE IN 2024 COMMONWEALTH SHORT STORY COMPETITION

Portia Subran was named the Caribbean regional winner of the 2024 Commonwealth Short Story Prize for her short story The Devil's Son.

Subran was awarded £2,500 for her winning entry, which was set in 1950s Chaguanas, Trinidad and Tobago. The story followed a retired oil worker whose buried secret was awakened by a haunting song, coinciding with the arrival of electricity in his village.

A writer and ink artist, Subran drew inspiration from her parents' colonial-era tales and her personal experiences. She previously won the 2019 Cecile de Jongh Literary Prize and the 2016 Small Axe Literary Short Story Competition and was a finalist in the 2022 BCLF Short Fiction Story Contest.

The Commonwealth Short Story Prize is awarded annually for the best piece of unpublished fiction from the Commonwealth. The 2024 prize received 7,359 entries. The regional winners advanced to the final judging, and the overall winner, announced on 26 June 2024, was Ms Sanjana Thakur from Mumbai, who received £5,000.

Caribbean Regional Winner: Ms Portia Subran, **Photo: Ravindra Ramkallawan Photography**. **Trinidad and Tobago Shortlisted Writers:** Ms Celeste Mohammed, **Photo: Damian Luk Pat Photography,** and Mr Stefan Bindley-Taylor, **Photo: Stefan Bindley-Taylor.**

Other Trinidad and Tobago Writers Shortlisted were Stefan Bindley-Taylor for his short story Wrinkle Release and Celeste Mohammed for her short story Terre Brulée.

Celeste Mohammed is a lawyer-turned-writer with an MFA in Creative Writing from Lesley University. Her award-winning short stories reflect her Indo-Trinidadian heritage and the challenges of growing up in a post-plantation culture marked by intimate partner violence. Her unpublished novel explores this complex history.

Stefan Bindley-Taylor is a Trinibagonian-American musician, writer, and educator. Based in Brooklyn, his writing blends absurdist and surrealist elements with a West Indian perspective, inspired by authors like V.S. Naipaul and Frantz Fanon. He also performs in the hardcore project FISHLORD and the alternative hip-hop project Nafets.

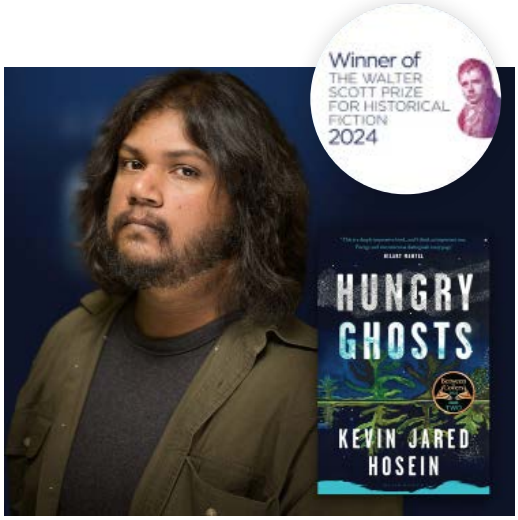
Both writers were among the 23 shortlisted authors selected by the international judging panel.

For more details on the shortlist and prize, visit Commonwealth Short Story Prize: https://commonwealthfoundation.com/short-story-prize/

Kevin Jared Hosein wins 2024 Walter Scott Prize for 'many-layered tale' of 1940s colonial Trinidad

Kevin Jared Hosein, a Trinibagonian author, was awarded the prestigious 2024 Walter Scott Prize for Historical Fiction for his novel Hungry Ghosts. Set in 1940s Trinidad, the novel was praised by judges as "richly imaginative, urgent, and compelling." Hosein was presented with the £25,000 prize by Mathew Maxwell Scott.

The Walter Scott Prize, established in 2009, is one of the UK's most esteemed literary awards, recognising excellence in historical fiction. The prize celebrates works that evoke the spirit of the past and enhance the appreciation of historical narratives in literature. Open to novels published in 2023 in the UK, Ireland, or the Commonwealth, the prize is reserved for books set at least 60 years ago, highlighting the lasting impact of historical storytelling.



Walter Scott Prize for Historical Fiction Winner: Kevin Jared Hosein

TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO HIGH COMMISSION, LONDON CELEBRATES EXTRAORDINARY MILESTONE WITH THE HOUSE OF ANGOSTURA

On 11 July 2024, the T&T High Commission in London hosted the inaugural "Rum-o-Rama: A Trinidad & Tobago Experience," celebrating the House of Angostura's 200th Anniversary!

Above: Angostura's Rums and Bitters in a variety of cocktails crafted by renowned Caribbean Craft Cocktail Kings Rumblin' on display at the booth.

Over 100 guests, including diplomats, distributors, and hoteliers, enjoyed an evening filled with vibrant Caribbean vibes. The event featured live steelpan music, stunning carnival costumes, and delicious culinary delights representing Trinidad and Tobago.

Guests savoured Angostura's Rums and Bitters in a variety of cocktails crafted by renowned Caribbean Craft Cocktail Kings Rumblin'. The event also showcased fantastic products from Trinidad and Tobago, including RHS Marketing/Karibbean Flavours, Kairi Chocolates, and Life Novo, and allowed company representatives to connect with potential partners and raise the profile of their products in London.

In his remarks, His Excellency Vishnu Dhanpaul, High Commissioner for the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago to the UK, expressed gratitude to Angostura for partnering with the High Commission and providing a platform for deeper commercial collaboration. He highlighted that Angostura Bitters is consistently a top export from Trinidad and Tobago to the UK, along with other key exports like methanol, ammonia, sauces, and machinery.

The event underscored Trinidad and Tobago's commitment to expanding market access in the UK for locally manufactured products. The recent establishment of a dedicated Commercial Officer at the High Commission aims to boost non-energy sector exports with strategic trading partners in the UK and the European Union.

Guests were encouraged to sample all the products on display, make new connections, and consider Trinidad and Tobago as a prime market for future commercial collaborations.

Here's to celebrating Angostura's incredible legacy and looking forward to even greater partnerships!

Pictured: 1) Rumblin' Bartender showcasing the versatility of Trinidad and Tobago rums from Angostura Limited, **2-4)** Guests enjoying cocktails drinks made with rums from Angostura Limited, **5)** Representatives from Kairi Chocolates, **6)** Representatives from RHS Marketing/Karibbean Flavours, **7)** Ms Adanna Taylor, Commercial Officer and a representative from Life Novo, **8)** Mr. Dexter Marchan providing music on the steelpan.

9) His Excellency Vishnu Dhanpaul, **10-12)** Specially invited guests enjoying the Rum-O-Rama event, **13)** (Centre) Mr. Paul Harrison, Head of Community, Wanis, and (right) Ms. Vesta Ratkeviečiūtė, Commercial Attaché, Embassy of Lithuania**, 14)** Mr Andrew Ramroop OBE and Ms Marianne Cwynarski CBE**, 15)** Mrs Andrea McLean**,** ITV Daytime Presenter with her parents**, 16)** Mr Ryan Lee and Mr Mark Chan Poon, Just Vibez, **17)** Mr Morris Aberdeen, Owner of Trude Restaurant and Bar, and Mr Marc Woods, Rumblin' mixologist, **18)** Mrs Beverley Awonaya, Public Affairs Culture and Tourism, and Mr Keiron Perez, **19)** Mrs Carol Valentine Heath, Security Attaché and Mr Hendrin Heath, **20)** Carnival masquerader and guests in front of the 50 years of Angostura celebratory banner.

INTERNATIONAL DAY OF WOMEN IN DIPLOMACY 2024

On 24 June 2024, the Trinidad and Tobago High Commission joined representatives from across the diplomatic community to mark the International Day of Women in Diplomacy.

The event, held at the Canadian High Commission, was hosted under the auspices of H.E. Karen-Mae Hill, High Commissioner for Antigua and Barbuda and Chair of Women in Diplomacy in London. Moderated by the UK Special Envoy for Small Island Developing States (SIDS), the panel discussion focused on the theme "Trailblazers in Adversity: Pioneering Women of Small Island Developing States."

Ms Janet Charles, Acting High Commissioner for Dominica, was among the distinguished panellists, along with representatives from Seychelles, Samoa, and the Maldives. The discussion highlighted the vital role of women leaders in SIDS in supporting climate resilience, championing sustainable development, and shaping a strong economic future.

Mrs Carol Valentine-Heath, Security Attaché, and Mrs Beverley Awonaya from the PACT Division represented the Trinidad and Tobago High Commission at the event.

1) His Excellency Ralph Goodale, High Commissioner for Canada delivered a welcome address, **2)** Ms Mandy Patsy Moustache, Acting High Commissioner of Seychelles, Her Excellency Maureen Francella Strickland, High Commissioner of Samoa, Ms Janet Charles, Acting High Commissioner for Dominica, Dr Iruthisham Adam High Commissioner of the Republic of Maldives, **3)** Various representatives from across the diplomatic community. **Photos: High Commission of Dominica, London**

CARICOM HEADS OF MISSION IN LONDON MEETING

On 27 June 2024, the High Commission of Trinidad and Tobago in the UK hosted the monthly meeting of the Caucus of CARICOM High Commissioners in London to discuss shared challenges and priorities. The gathering aimed to enhance collaboration on the upcoming Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting in Samoa, advance UK–Caribbean priorities, and raise the public profile of CARICOM in the UK..

Pictured: High Commissioner Vishnu Dhanpaul with representatives of the CARICOM Caucus and Heads of Missions.

HIGH COMMISSION IN LONDON CELEBRATES WORLD STEELPAN DAY 2024

Above: A cross section of the congregation at the Interfaith Service. **Below:** The Trinidad and Tobago flag raised to signal the start of the ceremonial military procession made up of a marching band of cadets and members of the Armed Forces in front of the High Commission.

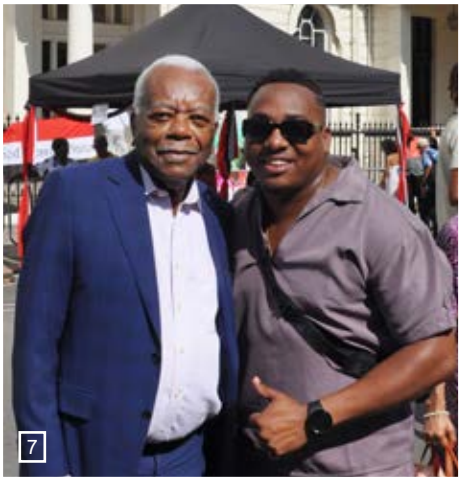
The High Commission of Trinidad and Tobago in London marked World Steelpan Day 2024 with a vibrant series of events, highlighting the rich cultural heritage of Trinidad and Tobago, the home of the steelpan. Nearly 500 attendees gathered at Belgrave Square to enjoy performances by UK-based steel bands - CSI Steelband, Ebony Steelband, and Melodians Steel Orchestra - alongside a lively cultural showcase featuring Moko Jumbies, kiddie carnival masqueraders, and a Rhythm section. The event included addresses from Acting High Commissioner Ms. Urvashi Ramnarine, Mr. Augustine Pepe Francis MBE, and Mr. Michael 'Chato' Toussaint.

In collaboration with the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and the Arts, the High Commission also facilitated a special performance by the Melodians Steel Orchestra, featured at the World Steelpan Day celebration in Woodford Square, Trinidad and Tobago. This recording was sponsored by Pan Trinbago.

Notable attendees included Councillor Ruth Bush, Deputy Lord Mayor of Westminster, and Sir Trevor McDonald OBE.

A significant aspect of the celebration was the media engagement. Interviews on i95.5 FM's "The Afternoon Drive Show" and WACK 90.1 FM in Trinidad and Tobago featured Mr. Raymond Butler, Immigration Attaché. Additionally, BBC Radio 5 Live aired a pre-recorded interview with Ms. Denise Hernandez, General Secretary of Pan Trinbago, conducted by Presenter Lisa McCormick. Mr. Butler and pannist Mr. Dexter Marchan also participated in a live segment on BBC World Service, joined by Professor Chandrika Kaul and Samuel Ramani, discussing the cultural significance of the steelpan.

The event was supported by the Ministry of Tourism, Caribbean Airlines Limited, and the Ministry of Foreign and CARICOM Affairs, reflecting the collective effort to celebrate Trinidad and Tobago's vibrant culture and the global impact of the steelpan on World Steelpan Day 2024.



1) Acting High Commissioner Ms Urvashi Ramnarine delivering opening remarks, flanked by Mrs Beverley Awonaya (left), Public Affairs, Culture and Tourism, and Mr Raymond Butler (right), Immigration Attaché. **2)** Attendees at the World Steelpan Day 2024 celebrations, **3)** Mr. Michael 'Chato' Toussaint, **4)** Ebony Steelband, **5)** CSI Steelband, **6)** Ms Adanna Taylor, Commercial Officer providing attendees with general information at the High Commission booth, **7)** Sir Trevor McDonald OBE and Mr Rodell Sorzano professionally known as Triniboi Joocie, **8)** Acting High Comissioner Ms Janet Charles, High Commission for Dominica, **9)** Mr Andrew James locally known sa D' Flagman.

10) Dr Natalie Johnson and family, **11-17)** Attendees at the World Steelpan Day 2024 celebrations, **18)** Calypsonian D'Alberto and family, **19) (from right)** Ms Michelle Charles, Rasheda Morton, Ms Rhonda Cox and a young volunteer, **20)** Ms Dawn Elie-Forde, Secretary to the High Commissioner and Ms Roselle Scott, Administrative Attaché, Embassy of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago in Belgium and a young volunteer.

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22) Ms Andrea McLean**,** ITV Daytime Presenter with her family, **23)** Ms Marianne Cwynarski CBE and her family, **24)** Young volunteers at the World Steelpan Day 2024 celebrations, **25)** Attendees at the World Steelpan Day 2024 celebrations**, 26)** Mr Justin Thomas and Ms Dianne Ramdeen of Just InCcarnival and Nigle Spinks, **27)** Ms Luan John**,** Ms Beverley Awonaya**,** and Ms Stacey Marshall-Francois, Accounts Attaché, **28)** Mrs. Donna Philip-Forde (right) and volunteers serves refereshments, **29)** RHS Marketing/Karibbean Flavours team serving refereshments to attendees, **19)** Mr Wendel Clement, Director of Campbell's of London Gallery, with friends and family, **31)** Mr Lawson Lovell with family.

MINISTRY OF ENERGY AND ENERGY INDUSTRIES SECURES IOPC FUNDING FOR TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO

The Ministry of Energy and Energy Industries reported that the Honourable Stuart R. Young M.P., Minister of Energy and Energy Industries and Minister in the Office of the Prime Minister l, led a high-level delegation to the London office of the International Oil Pollution Compensation (IOPC) Fund where Minister Young successfully advocated for Trinidad and Tobago's access to the 1992 IOPC Fund, resulting in the 1992 Fund Executive Committee deciding:

(a) that the 1992 Civil Liability and Fund Conventions would apply to this incident (the recent oil pollution incident off the Coast of Cove, Tobago); and

(b) to authorize the Director to make payment of compensation in respect of claims arising from this incident.

This decision provides for Trinidad and Tobago to be reimbursed its costs incurred as a result of the oil spill incident in February 2024.

Pictured: *First Row,* (L-R): Mr. Marc Rudder, Deputy Permanent Secretary (Ag.) Ministry of Energy and Energy Industries; the Honourable Stuart R. Young M.P. Minister of Energy and Energy Industries; Ms. Sandra Fraser, Permanent Secretary at the Ministry of Energy and Energy Industries. *Second Row*, (L-R): ; Captain Steve Don Polo, Commanding Officer Trinidad and Tobago Coast Guard; Dr. Ava Maxim, Director Institute of Marine Affairs; His Excellency, Vishnu Dhanpaul , High Commissioner for the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago to the United Kingdom; Ms. Indira Ramkissoon-Rambharose, Senior State Counsel Ministry of Energy and Energy Industries; Mr. Ronald Alfred, Deputy Permanent Secretary (Ag.) Ministry of Works and Transport; and Ms. Urvashi Ramnarine, Minister Counsellor, High Commission for the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago.**Photo: energy.gov.t**

TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO'S 62ND ANNIVERSARY OF INDEPENDENCE EVENSONG SERVICE AT WESTMINSTER ABBEY

Above: (L-R) seventh from left Acting High Commissioner Ms Urvashi Ramnarine with members of High Commission staff and invited members of diaspora. **At Right:** Her Excellency Rachér Croney, High Commissioner for Grenada, Her Excellency Theresa Rath, High Commissioner for Belize, His Excellency Milton Inniss, High Commissioner for Barbados and Her Excellency Karen-Mae C. Hill, OBE, High Commisioner for Antigua and Barbuda.

On Friday, 30 August 2024, members of staff from the Trinidad and Tobago High Commission joined nationals in the United Kingdom and other attendees for Evensong at Westminster Abbey. The service marked the 62nd anniversary of Trinidad and Tobago's Independence.

During the service, Acting High Commissioner Urvashi Ramnarine read the Second Lesson. Special prayers were offered for the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, its leaders, and its people.

Evensong at Westminster Abbey is an annual tradition graciously hosted by the Dean of Westminster in recognition of Trinidad and Tobago's Independence.

NATIONALS IN THE UNITED KINGDOM CELEBRATE TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO'S 62ND ANNIVERSARY OF INDEPENDENCE

Above: A cross section of the congregation at the Interfaith Service.

On Sunday 1st September, Acting High Commissioner Urvashi Ramnarine led members of the diaspora, friends of Trinidad and Tobago and other well-wishers in thanksgiving, at the St Peter's Eaton Square.

The theme for the service was Celebrating Our Diverse Nation. Participants on the day included The Reverend Jacqui Miller, Vicar at St Peter's Eaton Square, Father Henderson George, Father David Barrow and Acting High Commissioner Urvashi Ramnarine.

Dr Ozair Hasnain delivered the Reading on behalf of the Muslim faith, Reverend Daniel Foster and Reverend Stephanie Matthias delivered messages on behalf of the Spiritual Baptist faith, Ms Stacey Marshall-Francois delivered the Reading on behalf of the Christian faith and Pundit Rajneesh Tulsi-Ramprasad on behalf of the Hindu faith. Ms Carol Valentine-Heath, Security Attaché carried the flag.

Ms Luan John and Mr Ray Holmen on pan provided the musical offerings.

Mr Dexter Marchan provided entertainment on the steelpan in the Church courtyard while nationals partook of the sumptuous offerings which reflected the cuisine of Trinidad and Tobago.

Pictured: (L-R): Pundit Rajneesh Tulsi-Ramprasad, The Reverend Jacqui Miller, Vicar at St Peter's Eaton Square, Reverend Daniel Foster, Reverend Stephanie Matthias, Acting High Commissioner Urvashi Ramnarine, Ms Carol Valentine-Heath, Security Attaché, Dr Ozair Hasnain, Father David Barrow and Father Henderson George.

1) Ray Holman pannist, **2)** Ms Stacey Marshall-Francois, Accounts Attaché, **3-4)** A cross section of the congregation at the Interfaith Service, **5) (L-R) High Commission of Trinidad and Tobago staff members:** Mr Ethan Sealy, Ms Ameena Tenny, Mr Kevin King and Mrs Beverley Awonaya, **6)** Acting High Commissioner Ms Urvashi Ramnarine, speaking with H.E. Alexander Williams, High Commissioner for Jamaica and Acting High Comissioner Ms Janet Charles, High Commission for Dominica, **7)** Dr Ozair Hasnain and Father Henderson George greets nationals, **8)** Father David Barrow with nationals, **9-11)** Congregation gathers outside for refreshments.

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11) Pundit Rajneesh Tulsi-Ramprasad with members of the congregation, **13)** Dexter Marchan pannist, **14) Trineze Catering Staff:** Salena Hosein Karim, Nishad Karim, and Shelly Trotman-Dowrich, **12,15-20)** A cross section of attendees at the Interfaith Service,

T&T SCRIPT UNVEILING THE UNTOLD STORY OF CAZABON SHINES IN UK FILM FESTIVAL COMPETITION

Cazabon, a script penned by filmmaker Marilyn Birchfield, was been chosen for the second phase of the UK Film Festival (London) Script Competition. The script delves into the intriguing life of nineteenth-century Trinidad and Tobago landscape artist Michel-Jean Cazabon, focusing on his complex relationship with the British Governor, Lord Harris, and his romantic entanglements with French Creole woman Madeline Saturnin.

Born in 1813 to a French Creole father who migrated to Trinidad and Tobago from Martinique, Cazabon's artistic legacy lies in his distinctive portrayal of Trinidad's tropical landscape using traditional European techniques learned during his art studies in France. Despite not inventing a new painting style, Cazabon left an indelible mark on the local art scene, becoming one of the most renowned artists of the nineteenth century in Trinidad.

Above: Filmmaker and director Marilyn Birchfield and Historian and the late author Geoffrey Mac Lean at Medulla Gallery, Woodbrook in Trinidad and Tobago. **Photo: Nicole Drayton, Below:** Michel Jean Cazabon (1813-1888), *View of Trinity Church from Laventille Hill, Port of Spain, Trinidad,* **Photo: Christies.com**

Birchfield, herself from Trinidad and Tobago with a mixed cultural background, found Cazabon's story captivating due to its exploration of culture, friendship, and the love of art.

Drawing on research by the late local historian Geoffrey MacLean, Birchfield crafted her script, aiming to shed light on the artist's life and legacy.

MacLean's research, however, faced challenges due to the absence of self-portraits or photographs of Cazabon, leading to speculation that they were destroyed by his family members to protect his reputation. Despite this void, MacLean became a leading authority on Cazabon's life and work.

Birchfield's exposure to diverse cultures through her upbringing and professional experiences led her to establish her own production company, emphasizing the importance of preserving Caribbean cultural heritage through film and media.

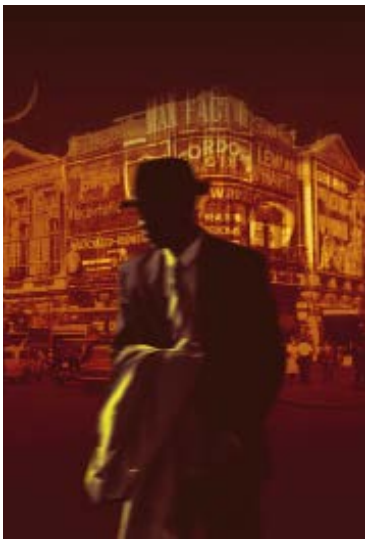
Excited by the recognition her script has received, Birchfield hopes it will be developed into a feature film, contributing to the growing interest in Cazabon's work, particularly in Europe. For future projects, she plans to explore Trinidad's rich folklore and heritage, including stories of La Diablesse and the soucouyant.

Edited from bit.ly/cazabonscript-chosen-for-ukfilmfestukfilmfest

BRINGING SAM SELVON'S CLASSIC TO LIFE: THE LONELY LONDONERS HITS THE STAGE

Jermyn Street Theatre premiered its adaptation of Sam Selvon's iconic novel about the Windrush generation, "The Lonely Londoners". Samuel Selvon, a Trinidad and Tobago-born writer who moved to London, England, in the 1950s, penned this groundbreaking novel. His innovative use of creolised English, or "nation language", for narrative as well as dialogue, continues to resonate with audiences. Adapted by Roy Williams and directed by Ebenezer Bamgboye, the production ran from 29 February to 6 April 2024.

Set in London, 1956, the story followed Henry 'Sir Galahad' Oliver, a recent immigrant from Trinidad eager to begin anew. However, upon his



Pictured: "The Lonely Londoners" poster for the stage play at the Jermyn St Theatre. **Photo: Jermyn St Theatre**

arrival at Moses Aloetta's doorstep, he discovered his host and friends disillusioned with city life. Would London's challenges dim Galahad's aspirations, or would these Lonely Londoners forge a home in a city that viewed them with suspicion?

In the first stage adaptation of Selvon's celebrated 1956 novel, Williams swept audiences back in time to shine a new light on London, friendship, and what they called home. The cast comprised of Tobi Bakare as Lewis, Gamba Cole as Moses, Shannon Hayes as Agnes, Gilbert Kyem Jnr as Big City, Carol Moses as Tanty, Aimee Powell as Christina, and Romario Simpson as Galahad.

Stella Powell-Jones, Artistic Director of Jermyn Street Theatre, expressed her excitement for the production, highlighting the significance of premiering the play at a venue so close to the setting of the novel. She anticipated the audience's response to this captivating, humorous, and poignant portrayal of characters that had resonated with readers for decades.

Edited from https://www.jermynstreettheatre.co.uk/

At left: (L-R) Shannon Hayes and Carol Moses, **Below: (L-R)** Tobi Barare, Gilbert Kyem Jnr, and Gamba Cole performing scenes from "The Lonely Londoners" at the Jermyn St Theatre. **Photos: Alex Brenner**

'TRINIDAD REMAINS' SHINES AT LA AND LONDON FILM FESTIVALS

The UK-TT Film Trinidad Remains made waves on the international festival circuit. The film was selected as one of 500 films from 5,000 submissions for the London Short Film Festival in January 2024. One month later, Trinidad Remains formed part of the line-up of over 140 films at the 32nd Pan African Film and Arts Festival in Los Angeles, California, USA.

The brainchild of UK-based, Trinidad and Tobago filmmaker Karen Martinez, Trinidad Remains premiered at the trinidad + tobago film festival (ttff) in September 2023, where it won the Best Narrative Short Film Award. This film is the product of a pioneering UK-TT collaboration. Karen Martinez joined forces with UK award-winning producer Natasha Dack-Ojumu of Tigerlily Productions and Trinidad and Tobago producer Lisa Wickham of Imagine Media International to bring to life the story of a British woman visiting her ancestral home for the first time.

Karen Martinez

Natasha Dack-Ojumu

Lisa Wickham

Emotional and evocative, the story sells itself. Dack-Ojumu, alongside Martinez, secured funding for the short film from the British Film Institute (BFI) and C15 Studios, while Wickham secured funding from FilmTT and TASC Enterprises Limited. Wickham also formed strategic partnerships with instrumental organisations such as the Chaguaramas Development Authority (CDA), the Airports Authority of Trinidad and Tobago (AATT), the Trinidad and Tobago Police Service (TTPS), the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and the Arts and the Ministry of Trade and Industry, to successfully execute the film.

The script was inspired by Martinez' experience as a Trinidad and Tobago national living in London for over 30 years and is based on a storyline from Scattered, the feature script that Martinez is developing with Dack Ojumu and Tigerlily Productions, also funded by BFI.

Shooting for the film took place in January 2023, with a local crew of 32 persons supporting the UK-Spain team.

Among the local crew were emerging filmmakers who benefited from hands-on training on the set of Trinidad Remains, as part of FilmTT's series initiative "Meet the Practitioner- Lessons with Lisa" under the guidance of Wickham.

In front of the camera, acclaimed actors Syntyche Bishop and Kevon Brooks were cast alongside British actress Leonie Elliot, known for her starring role in the BBC's Call the Midwife. This, as well as the lush terrain of the Northern Range, formed the perfect backdrop to this compelling story, underscoring the inextricable link between the land and its people.

Captains of industry at a private investor screening, praised the cinematography and original storytelling, the stunning visuals of the natural landscapes, and the authenticity with which the actors' lines were delivered. With rave reviews received from audiences, producers Dack-Ojumu and Wickham look forward to full support for the production of the TT-UK feature film, Scattered, scheduled to be shot in Trinidad. "People want to see more," Martinez observed; "they want to see how the characters develop and how the journey ends."

Edited from https://bit.ly/TrinidadRemains-shines-at-LA_UKFilmFests

FROM MORUGA TO MILAN: SAGABOI'S 'CALYPSO ARRIVAL' COLLECTION TAKES CENTER STAGE

At left: a selection of SABABOI by Geoff Cooper AW24 runway collection in Milan, **Below:** Geoff Cooper, **Photos: Vitalij-Sidorovic**

Geoff Cooper, the creative director of Sagaboi from Trinidad and Tobago, showcased his designs at Milan Fashion Week, marking a significant moment for Caribbean fashion on the global stage. His collection, "Calypso Arrival," pays homage to calypso music and fashion, celebrating Trinidad and Tobago's rich cultural heritage.

Cooper's journey from his humble beginnings in Moruga to the runways of Milan reflects his deep-rooted appreciation for his Trinbagonian heritage. Inspired by his upbringing and influenced by his family's involvement in fashion, Cooper's passion for design flourished over the years.

Throughout his career, Cooper has collaborated with renowned figures in the Trinidad and Tobago fashion industry and gained international recognition for his work. His personal style and commitment to representing Trinidadian culture have earned him praise and admiration worldwide.

The opportunity to showcase his collection at Milan Fashion Week was a dream come true for Cooper and a historic moment for Caribbean fashion. Despite challenges and limited resources, Cooper rallied local talent and creativity to bring his vision to life.

"Calypso Arrival" draws inspiration from the history of calypso music, celebrating its impact on Caribbean culture and creative expression. Cooper's collection captures the vibrant spirit of calypso with colourful tones, exquisite frills, and innovative designs, inviting audiences to experience the enchanting world of Caribbean fashion.

Sagaboi's Fall/Winter 2024 collection represents Cooper's dedication to cultural authenticity, artistic expression, and pushing the boundaries of Caribbean fashion on the global stage. As the first brand from Trinidad and Tobago to showcase at Milan Fashion Week, Sagaboi's presence signifies a significant milestone for Caribbean designers and the fashion industry as a whole.

Additionally, Cooper's collection was inspired by iconic calypsonians such as the Mighty Sparrow, Lord Blakey, Calypso Rose, and Lady Trinidad, whose influence on Caribbean culture and fashion is profound. His collaboration with local talent and organisations, including BLAKGOLD, further underscores his commitment to showcasing Trinbagonian creativity and innovation on the global stage.

To view the AW24 collection please visit: https://sagaboi.com/pages/aw24-looks

Edited from https://bit.ly/TT-Sagaboi-brings-fashion-to-MilanStage

CELEBRATING CARIBBEAN FASHION AND INNOVATION AT THE HIGH COMMISSION

The Cloth, a distinguished Caribbean heritage fashion brand, hosted a special dinner at the Trinidad and Tobago High Commission in London. The event introduced The Cloth to London and sparked a conversation on the potential of the Caribbean fashion industry, with a particular focus on West Indian Sea Island Cotton, a premium material grown exclusively in the Caribbean archipelago.

The dinner underscored the importance of developing a value chain where the Caribbean directly benefits from its own resources. By championing the "Made in the Caribbean" brand, The Cloth aims to elevate the region as a leader in luxury goods and high-quality fashion. The conversation also touched on aligning efforts with Afreximbank's Creative African Nexus (CANEX) program, which amplifies the creative industries across Africa and its diaspora, including the Caribbean, viewed as the 55th state of Africa. Insights from UNESCO's report on the African fashion sector were also discussed, further emphasizing the Caribbean's role in the global creative economy.

His Excellency Vishnu Dhanpaul hosted the evening, with support from Mrs Carol Valentine Heath and Mrs Beverley Awonaya of the High Commission of Trinidad and Tobago. His Excellency Milton Inniss, High Commissioner for Barbados was also in attendance, along with representatives from UNESCO, the Linnean Society, and fashion industry experts. Guests were treated to a Caribbean-inspired menu by Chef Brian Danclair, paired with non-alcoholic wines from Oddbird.

The event provided a platform for meaningful discussions and connections, reinforcing the Caribbean's presence in the global fashion landscape. It also set the stage for The Cloth's London showcase on 16–17 May 2024, which featured seasonal collections, including a capsule made from West Indian Sea Island Cotton.

Picutred: (L-R): Mrs Beverley Awonaya, Public Affairs Culture and Tourism, H.E. Milton Inniss, High Commissioner of Barbados, Mr. Robert Young founder of The Cloth, and Ms Raechelle Young, **2-5)** Guests at the Cloth's Dinner, **Photos: Abdel Abdulai @boyfromdagbon, 6)** Guests at the Cloth's London showcase at The Place London, **Photo: The Cloth Offical**

Edited from Instagram.com/theclothofficial

BRAND TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO SHOWCASED IN THE UK

The Torrance Mohammed Cultural and Arts Foundation led an initiative to highlight Trinidad and Tobago's culture in the UK, aiming to strengthen the country's international presence. Chairman Mr Deron Attzs, a cultural practitioner and promoter, observed that while Caribbean nations such as Jamaica and Grenada had a strong cultural identity in the UK, Trinidad and Tobago's representation was less visible. This inspired him to create a platform to connect the diaspora with their cultural heritage.

Pictured: Mr Deron Attz, Chariman of the Torrance Mohammed Cultural and Arts Foundation address attendees alongside the Art pieces by members of the Southern Arts Community Group. **Photo: Derron Attzs**

The foundation, in collaboration with the Southern Arts Community Group and Women of Colour Scotland, organised the Brand TT project, an exhibition held in the UK on 15 August 2024. The event featured a showcase of Trinidad and Tobago's visual arts, music, literature, and culinary heritage. The High Commission in London provided space for the exhibition, reflecting its commitment to supporting cultural initiatives.

The exhibition featured paintings capturing life in Trinidad and Tobago, as well as displays of traditional delicacies such as kuchela, red mango, bene balls, and sugar cake. The event attracted 200 attendees of both Trinidad and Tobago heritage and other backgrounds. The programme included performances by UK-based calypsonian Alexander D Great, steel pan music by Dexter Marchan, and a selection of calypso recordings, including tracks from former monarch Terri Lyons.

Chef Shane "Chef Chin" Austin provided insight into the history of local dishes such as doubles, pelau, coo coo, callaloo, and saltfish buljol. Book readings featured works by authors Sanja Dharamdass, Linda Green, and Keon Francis, while exhibitors such as Mink Wink and PanMasTraditions presented products and traditional Carnival portrayals.

Mr Attzs emphasised the need for continuity in cultural preservation, stressing that younger generations must be engaged to keep traditions alive. He noted that the event created a sense of community, as attendees shared stories and celebrated their heritage.

He also highlighted the impact of the visual arts segment, with artists from the Southern Arts Community Group in San Fernando receiving significant interest from visitors and art galleries. According to Mr Attzs, this recognition re-energised the artists and encouraged them to continue their work.

The project was funded and supported by participating artists and organisations. Mr Attzs urged the creative community to collaborate and invest in their art forms rather than relying solely on external funding. He acknowledged the government's role in supporting cultural initiatives but encouraged artists to take proactive steps in promoting their work independently.

He also addressed the importance of affordability in the arts sector, cautioning against inflated service costs that could limit accessibility. By fostering collaboration and maintaining reasonable pricing, he argued that cultural events could remain sustainable and attract wider audiences.

Mr Attzs praised recent efforts to elevate Trinidad and Tobago's cultural presence internationally, citing initiatives such as World Steelpan Day and Machel Montano's performance at the Apollo Theater. He expressed gratitude to the UK and Trinidad and Tobago teams, the High Commission, and Women of Colour Scotland for their contributions.

Reflecting on the success of Brand TT, he emphasised that raising global awareness of Trinidad and Tobago's culture was invaluable and should continue as an ongoing effort.

Edited from https://newsday.co.tt/2024/09/15/taking-brand-trinidad-and-tobago-to-the-uk

Pictured: (from top) Dr Charmaine Blaize (seated), co-founder of Women of Colour Scotland, highlights the book *How it was Back in The Day* by Sanja Dharamdass, Chef Chin sets out bara for doubles to be enjoyed by attendees and Pannist Dexter Marchan performed for visitors. **Photos: Deron Attzs**

CARISO – SEE, TASTE, WEAR , SMELL MUSIC

Submitted by **DEBORA ALLEYNE-DE GAZON**

Have you ever thought of tasting, wearing, seeing, or even smelling music? This was a remarkable experience introduced to the guests at the Launch of CARISO at the Trinidad and Tobago High Commission on 7th March 2024.

CARISO is designed by Ms. Debora Alleyne De Gazon (PgDip,MA) , arts educator, creative consultant, researcher, and former Creative Director of the London Notting Hill Carnival. The aim of the programme is to deliver bespoke workshops; workshops which lead to exhibitions; workshops and festival using music as a catalyst to unlock open-mindedness. This is

Pictured: Debora Alleyne De Gazon and guests at CARISO workshop

1) Ms. Rosalind Phillips McMillan**, 2)** Mr. Pepe Francis MBE, President of the British Association of Steelbands, **3)** UK Calypso monarch G'String, **4)** Debora Alleyne De Gazon and a guest with their presentation, **5)** Ms Beverley Elliot proudly displaying her presentation.

achieved by encouraging participants to listen with intent to analyse, synthesise and create thus associating previously un-associated concepts. The process also involves the utilization of various artistic skills (from either culinary, fashion, art, and others) to now see, taste, smell, or wear music besides dancing, singing, composing, or playing music.

Ms. De Gazon's inspiration for CARISO (the initial name for Calypso) came from the thought of preserving and perpetuating calypso music allowing diverse cultures including those who will not usually listen to calypso, to now explore the music astutely. Taking the idea to another level it has now been positioned to embrace music globally.

The guests, at the launch were privy to listen to former UK Calypso monarch Mr. Gerry Ranks, MBE, known professionally as, G'String, who spoke of the creative approach he employs in penning his calypsoes. He also entertained the guests with a verse and chorus from two of his calypsoes. G'String champions the work Debora is doing and sees CARISO as a meaningful programme which can benefit many people. Ms. Rosalind Phillips McMillan, a senior pre-assessment nurse with the NHS, addressed the audience on how beneficial CARISO is in supporting mental health. She also spoke at the end of the event on the unexpected therapeutical and enlightening experience she gained from the session. Mr. Augustine 'Pepe' Francis MBE the president of Ebony Steelband and the president of the British Association of the Steelband (BAS) addressed the audience expressing his honour to be involved as an official endorser of the programme. He further informed the audience that Trinidad and Tobago born, British singer and songwriter Mr. Leslie, Sebastian Charles MBE, professionally known as Billy Ocean is also an endorser of this unique programme. Later on, at the closing of the event Mr. Francis spoke of the impact the taster session had on enabling him to retrospect and introspect as he listened with intent and used some art skills to see the song "Suddenly" (which is his ringtone) from a different perspective. He said he believes the diverse idiosyncratic qualities of CARISO workshops makes it an excellent experience for anyone to have.

Following the presentations, the guests were engaged by the designer of CARISO, Ms. Debora Alleyne De Gazon as she guided them to experience a taster session of seeing music using selected visual art techniques. This approach facilitated the manifestation of their interpretation on paper, while listening to Billy Ocean's song "Suddenly". The energy was definitely transformed in the room with laughter, chatter. There was even a creation of a culinary dish based on the song. The guests had an empowering experience which they were enthused to speak about and were also happy to share their testimonies.

Some of the testimonies are:

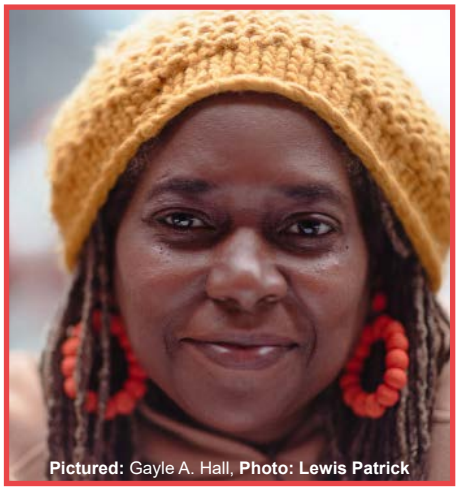
"That tasting gave me an open mind and allowed me think outside the box".

"The Launch delivered what was advertised and more".

"…it sparked contemplation on how the art of creation ignites inspiration within us and empowers individuals to enhance the weave of vibrations around us, guiding us through art, augmenting it's will to our muse".

"… I can see the value this diverse programme can bring to specific target groups and the wider society as a whole. As a matter of fact, having the in-session experience of the interaction between the host and 1 participant in particular endorsed the importance of this arts programme".

For further information on Creative Learning Circuit Ltd and subscribe for updates at https://subscribepage.io/6q8p1C. **For enquiries, email** CARISOARTS@gmail.com **or call** 07460 015042.



Pictured: Gayle A. Hall, **Photo: Lewis Patrick**

EXPLORING HERITAGE THROUGH ART: GAYLE A. HALL'S CARIBBEAN-INSPIRED CREATIONS

submitted by **GAYLE A. HALL**

Gayle A. Hall is British-born of Caribbean heritage, East London based mixed media artist. Creativity has always been in her nature and art has been at the forefront of her passions. Photography led her into a career in the television industry where she has been working as a live video editor for many years, winning Emmys for the Olympics and being part of BAFTA and RTS award winning productions along the way. As a member of BAFTA she takes part in voting and judging the television awards.

COVID 19, as with many people, changed her life. Where previously she was fully engaged in working on audience driven shows, sometimes with large crowds such as music festivals and light entertainment shows such as Big Brother, I'm a celebrity get out of here etc; her diary went from being completely full to empty overnight after the Prime Minister's announcement that the country would be in Lockdown from the 23 March 2020.

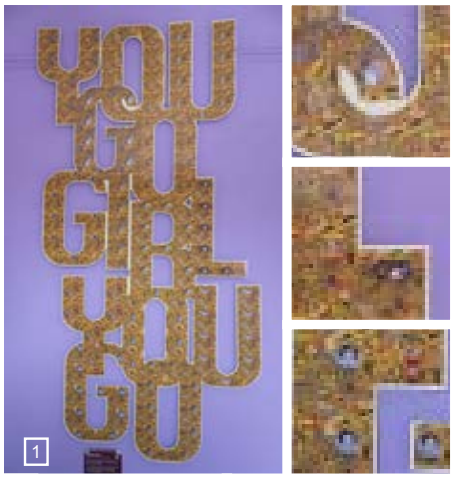
Her parents were from the Caribbean, her father from Barbados and her mother from Trinidad and Tobago. She would spend most of her free time with her mother, she would talk a lot about the vibrancy and energy of the island, the carnival and this would later translate it into her art and home interiors designs.

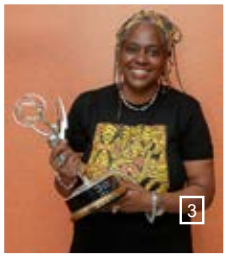
She had already started on the piece of artwork 'You Go Girl You Go' as a tribute to her mother. These words are what her mother would often say to her throughout her life. Using these words, she created a piece based on memories of love and life. It shows her mothers life story.

Gayle's first solo exhibition 'Portrait in Words' was in November 2021. Her work is based on memories and people and their histories using photographs as a starting point. Each piece conveys the essence and sensitivity of the person she is transforming into art whether as a portrait or portrait in words. 'It's like going to therapy,' a client from New York said when she was given a portrait of her mother aged 22 years.

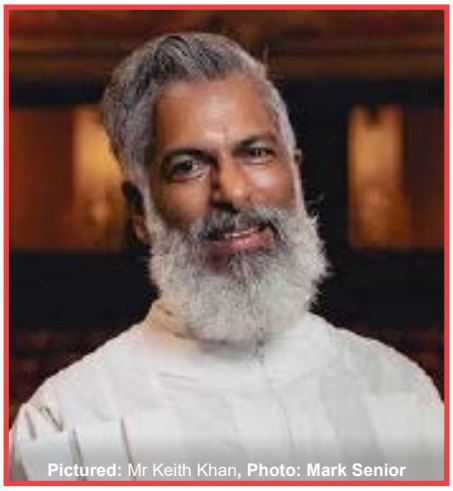
Following this exhibition Gayle has had two more solo exhibitions in London and contributed to the 'Some of us are Brave' exhibition in Oxford.

Gayle's artistry is constantly evolving and she has recently applied her abstract art to creating home interiors under the `For the Love of M' range. To learn more about Gayle A. Hall please visit: www.yougoproductions.co.uk





Above: 1, 2, 4, 5 & 6) Bespoke artworks by Gayle A. Hall on exhibition at her home, **3)** Gayle A. Hall holding one of her three Emmy awards, won for her work in both the winter and summer NBC Olympics, **7)** Gayle A. Hall speaking with Mrs. Urvashi Ramnarine, Minister Counsellor, about her wallpaper, **8)** Gayle A. Hall with Trinidad and Tobago High Commission staff members, **Photos: Gayle A. Hall**



Pictured: Mr Keith Khan, **Photo: Mark Senior**

KEITH KHAN APPOINTED AS THE CREATIVE DIRECTOR OF HACKNEY EMPIRE

Hackney Empire appointed Keith Khan as its Creative Director in September 2024.

Multi-disciplinary artist Keith Khan, who was born in London of Trinidadian Indian heritage, most recently directed and designed the acclaimed The Accountants at Factory International and has become renowned for his method of working with design and spectacle, underpinned by personal narrative and community engagement.

The Gift, a digital and textile project designed by Khan in 2023, celebrated all 33 wards and communities of Leeds and was commissioned by Leeds 2023 in collaboration with Burberry. The project is now installed across the 33 wards of Leeds as a textile gift to the city.

Khan set up the company Moti Roti and also worked independently as a Creative Director and lead artist on numerous commissions, such as The Queen's Commonwealth celebration for Her Jubilee and was Head of Culture for the London Olympic and Paralympic Games, and Chief Executive of Rich Mix.

Khan's work also includes art directing and designing ten independent films (including the recently re-released Flight); directing eight short films; directing 12 theatre shows (including OBIE award-winning Alladeen and Time Out Dance and Performance award-winning Moti Roti, Puttli Chunni); designing Carnival in Trinidad and Notting Hill for nine years, and for nine organisations; designing nine festivals, including Build at the Tate Modern (involving the active participation of 2000 young people nationally) and Rainbow of Wishes (involving an education project with 72 countries participating) and designing 30 theatre shows, including shows at Sadler's Wells, Opera North and Welsh National Opera. Keith Khan´s archive, of drawings, documents and objects was acquired by London´s Victoria and Albert Museum in 2014.

"I am super excited to be joining the team at Hackney Empire. It is in one of the best areas in London… the heart of many of my passions, such as design, fashion, and all sorts of creative people. It is a type of diversity that I hope to reflect in this amazing building. I love it, as it has such a reputation as a venue, not tied to a particular art form or community. Some recall it as a big bingo hall, others think about its comedy and music programme. But overall it is at the heart of London, and its focus appeals to multiple audiences. That is what I find thrilling about this opportunity."

- Keith Khan, Incoming Creative Director

"We are thrilled to be welcoming Keith Khan as our new Creative Director in September 2024. Keith has a long and distinguished record across a number of art forms, including designing a range of theatre shows and festivals from Trinidad to Notting Hill. Keith was Head of Culture for the London Olympics and Paralympic Games. In addition to deepening our well established and highly productive links with the local community, Keith's international reach will bring opportunities for new and diverse collaborations and partnerships. Yamin Choudury, our departing Artistic Director and Jo Hemmant CEO have transformed the fortune of Hackney Empire to the point where we can look forward with optimism to the many challenges facing the sector. Keith Khan is an exciting addition to our talented and hard-working team."

- Sir William Atkinson, Chair of the Board of Trustees

Edited from https://www.hackneyempire.co.uk/news/keith-khan-appointed-creative-director

Below: Mr Keith Khan, Creative Director and Ms Jo Hemmant, Executive Director at Hackney Empire Theatre, London. **Photo: Mark Senior**

Pictured: Dr Elaine Arnold, **Photo: Elaine Arnold**

ELAINE ARNOLD OBE, SOCIAL WORKER AND ACADEMIC RESEARCHER

In 2023, Dr. Elaine Arnold was awarded an OBE in the King's Birthday Honours for her groundbreaking work.

A pioneer in studying the effects of separation, loss, and trauma among African Caribbean families in the UK, her work has transformed the understanding of attachment theory and its real-world implications. In 2023, members of the local community gathered to celebrate her birthday, marking both a personal milestone and her exceptional legacy.

Born in Trinidad and Tobago in 1931, Dr. Arnold's journey has been one of tireless commitment to advocating for families affected by migration and displacement. She moved to Britain in the late 1950s to pursue postgraduate studies and later became a lecturer at Goldsmiths College and Sussex University, shaping future generations of social workers. She also served as Director of Training at Nafsiyat, an Intercultural Therapy Centre dedicated to supporting diverse communities.

Dr. Arnold's work has been instrumental in shedding light on the profound impact of family separation, loss, and trauma, particularly among West Indian migrants in Britain. Her work highlights the importance of secure early attachments and explores the challenges posed by broken attachments and traumatic reunions, issues relevant across various societal contexts and among children separated under different circumstances.

In 1999, Dr. Arnold founded Supporting Relationships and Families (SRF), previously known as the Separation and Reunion Forum, with a group of African Caribbean women who had experienced similar challenges as children. As Director of SRF, she continues to lecture widely on the Theory of Attachment, Separation, and Loss and its relevance to the caring professions.

Her research and advocacy continue to resonate beyond the African Caribbean community, informing broader discussions on the effects of broken attachments and reunions under various circumstances, including displacement due to war, adoption, and foster care. Through her dedication to raising awareness and educating caregivers, she has become a highly respected voice in social work and psychology.

To honour her lifelong commitment to improving lives, members of the local community, friends, and colleagues came together to celebrate Dr. Arnold's birthday in 2024. The gathering was a heartfelt tribute to her work and the lasting impact she has made on countless individuals and families. It was a moment to reflect on her remarkable journey and to express gratitude for her invaluable contributions.

Pictured: Dr Roxanne Crosby-Nawaobi, **Photo:** Roxanne Crosby-Nawaobi

DR. ROXANNE CROSBY-NWAOBI RECEIVES THE RCN FELLOWSHIP AWARD

Dr. Roxanne Crosby-Nwaobi has been awarded a Fellowship from the Royal College of Nursing (RCN), the highest honour given to an RCN member. This prestigious recognition celebrates her exceptional commitment to advancing nursing science, improving health, and enhancing patient care.

Dr. Crosby-Nwaobi's Fellowship follows her achievement as the 2023 RCN Researcher of the Year. During 2024, she has earned 11 awards for her contributions to nursing, including the Nursing Times Digital Technology Award and the Moorfields Chair Award for outstanding contribution to the trust.

Her dedication to advancing the field of ophthalmic nursing is unwavering, and she continues to support the RCN's work and forums in this specialised area. Dr. Crosby-Nwaobi's continued excellence in the field exemplifies the highest standards of nursing practice and leadership.

Pictured: Ms Kerissa Khan
Photo: Royal Aeronautical Society

KERISSA KHAN'S DREAMS TAKE OFF – TRINI ENGINEER HEADS ROYAL AERONAUTICAL SOCIETY

In the quiet town of Rio Claro, Trinidad, a young girl named Ms. Kerissa Khan found fascination in the sky above her. Little did she know that her childhood wonder would propel her to become one of the foremost figures in aeronautical engineering, inspiring countless others along the way.

Ms. Khan's journey from the sunny shores of Trinidad to the forefront of aerospace innovation is nothing short of remarkable. Educated at Naparima Girls' High School, her passion for math and science flourished, setting the stage for her future endeavors. Guided by her curiosity and determination, she pursued a Master of Engineering degree with Honours in Aeronautical Engineering from the University of Glasgow.

Today, Ms. Khan stands as a technical expert in complex aerospace systems and a thought leader in sustainable aviation. As a driving force behind the £300M Future Flight Challenge at UK Research and Innovation, she is shaping the future of aviation for the third revolution. Her work encompasses a vision for zero-carbon air mobility, underscoring the importance of innovation in addressing global challenges.

Ms. Khan's impact extends far beyond her technical expertise. As a founding signatory of the Women in Aviation and Aerospace Charter and Women in Defence Charter, she is dedicated to fostering diversity and inclusion within the industry. Her leadership roles, including as the president of the Royal Aeronautical Society, exemplify her commitment to advancing the field and empowering future generations.

Recognised in prestigious publications like the 2022 Power Book for her contributions to the eVTOL industry, Ms. Khan's accolades underscore her significance on the global stage. Her previous roles in research, design, and development of aerospace systems for leading aircraft manufacturers further solidify her reputation as an industry trailblazer.

Despite the lack of a local aerospace industry in Trinidad and Tobago, Ms. Khan's upbringing instilled in her a deep sense of resilience and determination. Her journey serves as a testament to the power of ambition and the impact of mentorship. Reflecting on her roots, she acknowledges the support of her community and the pivotal role of her secondary education in shaping her aspirations.

Beyond her professional achievements, Ms. Khan remains grounded in her faith and values. Her commitment to serving others and making a positive impact drives her work, reinforcing the importance of purpose-driven leadership.

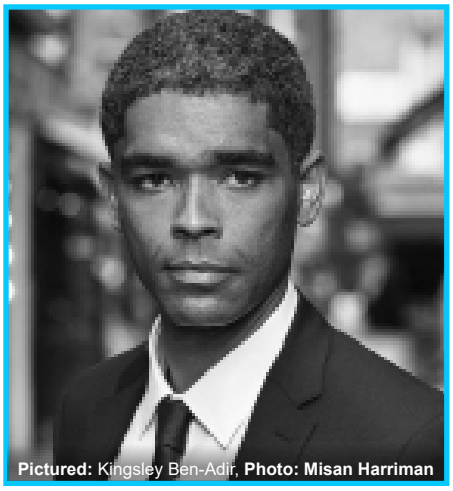
To learn more about Ms. Kerissa Khan and her groundbreaking work, visit the Royal Aeronautical Society's website and explore her contributions to shaping the future of aviation.

Edited from https://newsday.co.tt/2024/03/17/kerissa-khans-dreams-take-off-trini-engineer-heads-royal-aeronautical-society/

Pictured: Ms. Kerissa Khan stands beside her design masterpiece, the Bombardier Global 7500: world's largest, fastest, longest-range business jet, **Below:** Ms. Kerissa Khan (fourth from the left) at her inauguration banquet at the Royal Aeronautical Society, with her brother, Mr. Shirayd Khan (far left), Ms. Gwynne Shotwell, President of SpaceX (third from the left), and Mr. Hajime Hayashi, Japanese Ambassador to the UK (far right), accompanied by senior executives from NASA, the UK Space Agency, Airbus, Boeing, and the Royal Air Force. **Photos: Royal Aeronautical Society**

The Mission wishes to invite submissions from the Diaspora on various topics which may include short stories, poems and other interesting tidbits on life here and back home for possible inclusion in the newsletter.

Email: ***hclondonPACT@foreign.gov.tt***



Pictured: Kingsley Ben-Adir, **Photo: Misan Harriman**

KINGSLEY BEN-ADIR TRANSFORMS INTO BOB MARLEY FOR BIOPIC: CAPTURING THE REGGAE LEGEND

One might assume that after receiving widespread acclaim for his portrayals of two iconic American figures, Mr. Kingsley Ben-Adir would readily embrace the opportunity to embody another legend, Bob Marley. However, despite earning rave reviews for his performances as Malcolm X and Barack Obama, Mr. Ben-Adir initially hesitated.

"I had a lot of reservations," he confessed to Entertainment Weekly. "I was completely convinced that there's no point in auditioning for this. I can't sing. I can't dance."

Nevertheless, after much contemplation, Mr. Ben-Adir relented and submitted an audition tape, ultimately clinching the role after a rigorous, year-long, global casting process. Yet, his casting sparked immediate backlash.

Many Jamaicans expressed frustration and disappointment that the role did not go to a Jamaican, or even one of Marley's own descendants. Hollywood's history of misrepresenting Caribbean cultures, from accents to cultural nuances, heightened the sensitivity of the casting choice.

Director Reinaldo Marcus Green, however, stood firm in his belief that they had found the right person for the job. Supported by Marley's family, including his widow Ms. Rita Marley and their children Mr. Ziggy Marley and Ms. Cedella Marley, the casting decision was backed by the producing team.

In a featurette promoting the film, Ziggy Marley, who was closely involved in the production, praised Mr. Ben-Adir for his portrayal of his legendary father. He commended Mr. Ben-Adir for capturing not just the iconic persona of Bob Marley, but also his humanity and emotional depth.

In an interview with journalist Mr. Anthony Miller, Ms. Cedella Marley emphasized the pivotal role of Mr. Ben-Adir's performance in the success of the film. She expressed confidence in Mr. Ben-Adir's ability to surprise audiences, highlighting the diverse cast's commitment to authenticity.

Born on 20 November 1986, in London's Kentish Town to Trinbagonian mother and British father, Mr. Ben-Adir's upbringing was enriched by his Trinbagonian heritage. Spending weekends and school holidays with his maternal grandparents, who had emigrated from Trinidad to England in the 1970s, Mr. Ben-Adir developed a deep connection to the culture and traditions of Trinidad and Tobago.

His journey into acting began later in life, following a period of work with special needs students after secondary school. Inspired by his passion for film and television, he enrolled in the Guildhall School of Music & Drama at the age of 21, graduating in 2011.

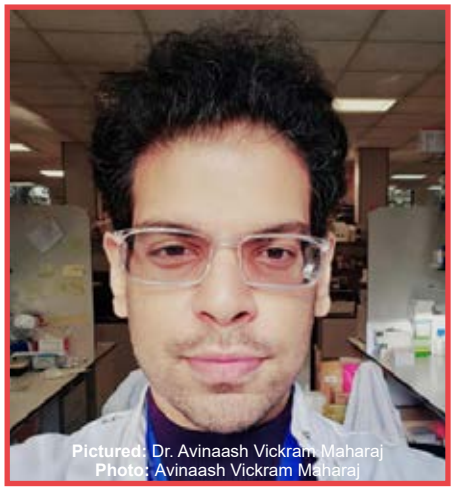
Mr. Ben-Adir's career flourished with notable roles in theater, television, and film. From performances at the Old Vic to main roles in ITV's Vera and Netflix's Peaky Blinders, he showcased his versatility and talent. His breakthrough came with the portrayal of Malcolm X in One Night in Miami, earning him critical acclaim and paving the way for further opportunities, including his role as Barack Obama in The Comey Rule.

Despite the demanding nature of his roles, Mr. Ben-Adir's commitment to excellence never wavered. His dedication to embodying the essence of Bob Marley in the upcoming biopic, Bob Marley: One Love, is evident in his immersive preparation. Learning to sing and play guitar, mastering Jamaican Patois, and embodying Marley's spirit, Mr. Ben-Adir's portrayal promises to be a poignant tribute to the reggae icon.

With his remarkable talent and unwavering dedication, Mr. Kingsley Ben-Adir continues to captivate audiences and leave an indelible mark on the world of entertainment.

Edited from https://www.caribbean-beat.com/issue-180/kingsley-ben-adir-relishing-the-challenge-snapshot

Above: Kingsley Ben-Adir as Bob Marley in 'Bob Marley: One Love'. **Photo: Paramount Pictures** and as 'Ken' in 'Barbie' movie promotional Poster. **Photo: Warner Bros. Studios**

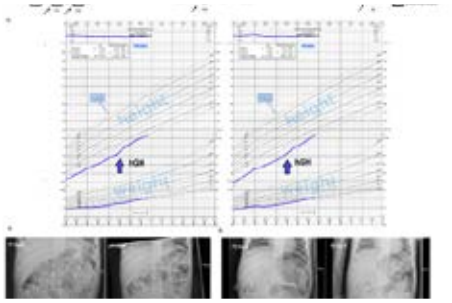


Pictured: Dr. Avinaash Vickram Maharaj
Photo: Avinaash Vickram Maharaj

TRINBAGONIAN SCIENTIST UNLOCKS GENETIC MYSTERY BEHIND GROWTH AND IMMUNE DISORDERS

A groundbreaking discovery by Dr. Avinaash Vickram Maharaj, a scientist from Trinidad and Tobago, has shed light on a genetic cause behind a rare syndrome affecting growth, immunity, and digestive function. Named Maharaj-Storr Syndrome, after Dr. Maharaj and his collaborator Professor Helen Storr, this condition is linked to mutations in the QSOX2 gene, which plays a critical role in regulating growth, metabolism, and cellular energy production.

Dr. Maharaj, a Clinical Postdoctoral Researcher specialising in Paediatric Endocrinology, brings extensive experience in treating complex #endocrine conditions, including those related to the growth hormone and insulin-like growth factor (GH/IGF-1) axis. His deep knowledge in hormone genetics and specific metabolic pathways, such as the glucocorticoid and sphingolipid systems, laid the groundwork for this discovery. Through precise genetic sequencing, Dr. Maharaj and his team uncovered that QSOX2 mutations disrupt crucial cellular processes tied to growth, immunity, and energy use. By identifying this gene's unexpected role in growth regulation and mitochondrial health, he has expanded scientific understanding of how genetic changes impact multiple body systems, particularly the gut and immune response.



At left: Pedigree charts of all families and anthropometric analyses of Kindred 1, **Photos: Avinaash Vickram Maharaj**

This discovery, published in Nature Communications, is particularly relevant for individuals suffering from short stature, immune challenges, and severe gastrointestinal symptoms. As Dr. Maharaj continues to explore the gastrointestinal implications of this syndrome, his work holds promise for new therapies, bringing hope to those affected by these complex disorders.

Read the full research report: https://www.nature.com/articles/s41467-024-52587-w and

Dr. Maharaj LinkedIn post: https://www.linkedin.com/posts/avinaash-v-maharaj-820560334_new-research-led-by-dr-avinaash-maharaj-activity-7255201704218972160-oRIQ

TWO T&T NATIONALS WIN CHEVENING SCHOLARSHIPS

Two Trinidad and Tobago nationals, Nestor Garcia and Reyad Mohammed, have been selected to receive fully-funded scholarships to pursue their master's degrees in the UK, said the British High Commission in a press release on 22 August 2024.

Garcia, a UWI graduate was part of the award winning delegate at the 65th Harvard National Model United Nations Competition. There he won the Diplomatic Commendation Award.

With over five years of international tax policy and experience, Garcia plans to use his passion for the subject to improve the technical expertise of local stakeholders in dealing with international tax issues.

Pictured: Nestor Garcia and Reyad Mohammed,
Photos: British High Commission, Port of Spain

He will be pursuing a Masters of Law in International Tax Law at the Queen Mary University of London.

Garcia said, "Being awarded the Chevening Scholarship is a truly life changing opportunity to develop not only my international tax expertise at one of the best tax programmes in the world but also will foster lifelong connections with future change makers.

"On my return to TT, I will strive to help build domestic capacity to deal with contemporary international tax issues."

Mohammed is currently an Environmental Education Officer at the Environmental Management Authority (EMA) where he builds national awareness through shaping and implementing national climate action strategies while fostering public engagement. He earned a degree in Biology at UWI St. Augustine in 2020 where he specialised in Marine, Environment and Ecology Biology and

received the Best Performance Awards in all three areas.

Committed to achieving sustainability through education, he founded the youth-led NGO ClimateWho and will be pursuing a Masters of Science in Climate Change at the University College London.

He said, "Securing a Chevening scholarship is an everlasting honour and the pinnacle of my achievements thus far. This extraordinary experience will undoubtedly provide me with unparalleled avenues for professional and academic advancement and mutualistic networking opportunities.

"Upon returning, I aim to leverage the knowledge and experiences gained during this journey to empower a generation of Trinbagonian climate stewards."

British High Commissioner Harriet Cross said, "We are immensely proud of Reyad and Nestor on their Chevening Scholarships. Their selection to pursue advanced studies in Climate Change and International Tax Law reflects the exceptional talent and potential within Trinidad and Tobago.

"The UK believes in the power of education to change lives, and we are committed to supporting the next generation of leaders from this vibrant nation."

She encouraged more students to apply for the Chevening scholarship as she believes it an opportunity to "gain world-class education in the UK and to bring back valuable knowledge and expertise to contribute to the future of Trinidad and Tobago."

The Chevening scholarship is an international awards programme, funded by the UK's Foreign and Commonwealth Office, which aims developing global leaders since 1983. The selection process is highly competitive and applications are reviewed by British embassies and High Commissions around the world.

Over 160 Trinidad and Tobago students have received scholarships and have contributed to fields including government, climate, journalism and law.

Edited from www.facebook.com/ukintt

CÉLINE GITTENS TAKES CENTRE STAGE IN THE SLEEPING BEAUTY FOR BIRMINGHAM ROYAL BALLET'S UK TOUR

Pictured: Céline Gittens, **Photo: Birmingham Royal Ballet**

Born in Trinidad and Tobago and raised in Vancouver, Canada, Céline Gittens accomplished ballerina trained with her mother, Janet Gittens, and at Vancouver's Goh Ballet Academy. Her accolades began early, with the Royal Academy of Dance Solo Seal (2004) and Gold Medal and Audience Choice Award at the Genée International Ballet Competition (2005). In 2006, she became a finalist at the prestigious Prix de Lausanne.

She joined Birmingham Royal Ballet in 2006, where she rose to the position of Principal in 2016. Her repertoire spans classical and contemporary works, with lead roles in Don Quixote, Coppélia, Giselle, The Sleeping Beauty, and Romeo and Juliet. She has performed in works by renowned choreographers such as George Balanchine, Frederick Ashton, Kenneth MacMillan, and Christopher Wheeldon.

In 2011, her contributions to the arts were recognised when she was invited to Buckingham Palace to celebrate young performers. She returned to perform Swanilda from Coppélia for HRH Prince Charles in 2016.

She earned an MPhil from the University of Birmingham in 2012 and has a keen interest in choreography, creating pieces for competitions and dance workshops. Her international guest appearances include The Sleeping Beauty and Romeo and Juliet at the International Festival of Miami (2018), and roles with The Australian Ballet as the Queen of Hearts in Alice's Adventures in Wonderland and the Sugar Plum Fairy in The Nutcracker (2019).

At right: Céline Gittens as "Aurora" with Yasiel Hodelin Bello in Sir Peter Wright's Production of The Sleeping Beauty. **Photo: Lachlan Monaghan**

Pictured: High Commissioner Vishnu Dhanpaul with another national of Trinidad and Tobago, Mr. Christopher Rodriguez, Director of Finance and Resources at Birmingham Royal Ballet. **Photo courtesy Birmingham Royal Ballet**

In April 2024, she delivered a breathtaking performance as Princess Aurora in The Sleeping Beauty at Sadler's Wells Theatre in London. High Commissioner Vishnu Dhanpaul attended on the invitation of the ballet company, witnessing an unforgettable display of grace and technical brilliance.

Edited from https://www.brb.org.uk/profile/céline-gittens

BARONESS FLOELLA BENJAMIN DBE HONOURED WITH TWO PRESTIGIOUS AWARDS IN 2024

Baroness Floella Benjamin DBE DL received two prestigious awards in 2024, marking a significant year for her remarkable contributions to television, diversity, and children's rights.

In May, Baroness Benjamin was honoured with the BAFTA Fellowship at the BAFTA Television Awards with P&O Cruises. The Fellowship, BAFTA's highest award, was presented to her in recognition of her exceptional impact on the television industry. Baroness Benjamin's career spans fifty years, during which she has been a strong advocate for diversity and inclusion, particularly focusing on the representation of children and underrepresented communities. The award was presented by BBC Newsreader Clive Myrie at a ceremony held at the Southbank Centre's Royal Festival Hall on 12 May 2024.

Left: Baroness Benjamin DBE DL honoured with the BAFTA Fellowship at the BAFTA Television Awards. **Right:** Baroness Benjamin DBE DL with the Award of Excellence at the CARICOM Day reception in London. **Photos courtesy Baroness Benjamin DBE**

Later in the year, on 19 July 2024, Baroness Benjamin was also recognised with the Award of Excellence at the CARICOM Day reception hosted by the CARICOM Heads of Mission in London at the International Maritime Organization (IMO). This event, which celebrated Caribbean unity and culture, saw Baroness Benjamin, along with Baroness Patricia Scotland and Sergeant Major Johnson Beharry, honoured for their outstanding contributions to the Caribbean community.

The CARICOM Day reception featured cultural performances, including a rendition of the CARICOM Anthem by Chevening Scholar Julie-Ann Charles, and Steel Pan music. The evening was a celebration of Caribbean culture, with traditional cuisine adding to the festivities.

20 YEARS OF YOUNG AND TALENTED: INSPIRING THE NEXT GENERATION

Young and Talented (Y&T) on 30 June 2024, celebrated its 20th anniversary with a gala event, marking two decades of empowering young people through the performing arts. The evening showcased alumni who have found success in television, film, and the West End, alongside current students eager to continue their artistic journeys.

Founded in 2004 by Trinbagonian Suzann McLean MBE, Y&T has nurtured young talent, helping them gain confidence and develop skills for stage, screen, and life. It provides a space for self-expression, creativity, and meaningful storytelling.

The anniversary event highlighted Y&T's impact, featuring performances from past

Above: Suzann McLean MBE, **Top right:** Akai Coleman Y&T Originate Alumni, **At right:** Suzann McLean MBE, Founder of Y&T on stage with Young & Talented students. **Photo courtesy Young & Talented**

and present students. Many alumni have built successful arts careers, demonstrating the lasting benefits of the programme's support.

Y&T has launched thousands of careers, fostering artistic growth and self-belief. The 20th Anniversary Gala at Hackney Empire celebrated two decades of excellence.

Cristiano Cuino starred as Little Michael in MJ the Musical in the West End. *"What I love most about Y&T is meeting people who share my passion and getting to perform. Y&T helped me follow my dream."*

Leanne Robinson began her journey at Y&T before starring in The Book of Mormon in the US and West End. She later played Zindzi Mandela in Mandela, A New Musical at the Young Vic. *"Y&T gave me the confidence and skills I needed in a fun and safe environment."*

Jordan Benjamin trained at Y&T and now stars as John Laurens/Philip Hamilton in Hamilton at the Victoria Palace Theatre. *"Y&T helped me express myself and build my career in the performing arts."*

Suzann McLean, who has led Y&T's growth, was honoured with an MBE in the King's Birthday 2023 Honours List for her services to the arts and marginalised young people. As CEO and Artistic Director of Theatre Peckham, she has created opportunities for underrepresented young people to pursue arts careers, shaping both Y&T and Theatre Peckham. **For further information on Y&T please visit: https://youngandtalented.co.uk**

Edited from https://youngandtalented.co.uk/

Pictured: (From top) Cristiano Curio performing as young Michael Jackson on stage, Leanne Robinson, Y&T Alumni and musical theatre actress and singer, and Ayanna, Y&T Alumni and singer.
Photos courtesy Young & Talented

HONOURING A LEGACY: JUSTIN SOBION PRESENTS THE WEST INDIAN LAWYER

On the 10th July 2024, The High Commission hosted one of our nationals Justin Sobion for his "Book Talk" on *The West Indian Lawyer – Keith Sobion*. This book is a biography of the life and times of Justin's father Keith Sobion.

In his Book Talk, Justin traced his family roots (on both his paternal and maternal sides) to the seaside village of Mayaro in Trinidad. After completing his A-Level examination at St Mary's College (CIC), Port of Spain, Keith was admitted to study law at the University of the West Indies (Trinidad and Barbados campuses) in 1970. In 1975, Keith and his cohorts became the first law graduates to be trained within the region. Prior to that time, if one wished to pursue a career in law in the English-speaking Caribbean, one had to be trained in the United Kingdom.

After being admitted to the Bar, Keith practised law at JD Sellier and Company in Port of Spain. In 1991, he left private practice to pursue politics – where he was elected an MP for Ortoire/Mayaro and appointed Attorney-General and Minister of Legal Affairs of Trinidad and Tobago (1991-1995) under the Patrick Manning administration. After politics, Keith was appointed the Principal of the Norman Manley Law School at Kingston, Jamaica until his untimely demise in 2008.

Pictured:
1) Mr Justin Sobion addresses the attendees,
2) Mr Justin Sobion and Ms Urvashi Ramnarine, Minister Counsellor,
3&4) Mr Justin Sobion with guests.

As so demonstrated by Justin – Keith was well loved by all who crossed his path and garnered the respect of many. As the *Newsday* wrote about him (in 2008) –

"He (Keith) was a man more interested in ideas and civic duty than in making money. The Caribbean could use more people like him."

The West Indian Lawyer is available online on all digital platforms and at New Beacon Books, London.

RUDOLPH WALKER CBE: WALKING WITH DIGNITY

Pictured: 1) Rudolph Walker CBE with a copy of his book *Walking with Dignity*, **2)** H.E. Vishnu Dhanpaul and Rudolph Walker CBE**, 3)** Rudolph Walker CBE and Juliet Alexander, Journalist and TV show host, **4)** Attendees who raised points during the Question and Answer segment of the Book Launch, **5)** A group of stage and television actors and authors who attended the book launch. **Photo: Ryan Haven | Rock & Stone 4Tography**

On Thursday 19th September Rudolph Walker CBE launched his autobiography *Walking with Dignity* at the High Commission in the presence of His Excellency Vishnu Dhanpaul, Baroness Patricia Scotland and other high profile guests.

Rudolph Malcolm Walker CBE is a Trinbagonian actor, best known for his roles on British television. Born and raised in Trinidad and Tobago he left bound for the United Kingdom with the aim of furthering his career at the age of 20 in 1960.

He was one of the first Black actors to be seen regularly on British television and the first Black actor to appear in a major British TV series in the 1970s sitcom Love Thy Neighbour. He has had a long and varied acting career working in film as well as television. He is currently appearing as Patrick Trueman in the BBC One TV soap opera EastEnders, in which he has acted since 2001.

Rudolph was made an Officer of the Order of the British Empire (OBE) in 2006 for his services to drama and a Commander of the British Empire (CBE) in 2020 for services to charity and drama.

Rudolph has always been a great believer in 'giving back' supporting many charities over the years including the ACLT (African Caribbean Leukaemia Trust), Prostate Cancer UK, Friends of Tafo (supporting a small Ghanaian Town), Haven Hospices, and the Sickle Cell Foundation to name but a few.

Rudolph Walker CBE children Mr Darren Walker ad Ms Sheona Walker. **Photo: Ryan Haven | Rock & Stone 4Tography**

On Rudolph's 70th birthday, he launched The Rudolph Walker Foundation to nurture and develop the creative and technical skills and talents of young people. He believes that self-esteem is crucial to the development of responsibility and ambition in young people; and works to develop self-esteem through teamwork and common objectives and goals.

The Foundation runs Rudolph Walker's inter-School Drama Award (RWiSDA), competed for by schools across the UK. In addition, Rudolph Walker's Role Model Award (RWRMA) is presented to outstanding students who have contributed something special like demonstrating positive leadership, a good influence to their peers and others, and a role model within the community. The Foundation also works with young people at risk of exclusion in education and has achieved great results in this area.

In his autobiography Walking with Dignity Rudolph shares the stark realities of his early life in the Caribbean, his bold move to Britain, his struggle against the pervasive racism of the 1960s and 70s and his continued efforts to promote equality

today. Rudolph has faced immense challenges but never lost his enduring optimism or his distinctive sense of humour. Walking with Dignity examines Rudolph's pioneering contributions to British TV, highlighting his iconic roles in the controversial sitcom Love Thy Neighbour and the beloved soap EastEnders. Through these roles, Rudolph not only entertained millions but also subtly challenged and reshaped cultural perceptions.

Walking with Dignity offers an insight into the life of a man who has witnessed profound social changes and emerged with his spirit unbroken. Rudolph is a true Son of the Soul and continues to fly the flag of his beloved Trinidad and Tobago

Pictured: Rudolph Walker CBE signs copies of his book and poses for photo with a guest. **Photo: Ryan Haven | Rock & Stone 4Tography**

RAMESHWARAM MANDIR UK DIWALI CELEBRATIONS 2024

Pictured: 1) Pundit Rajneesh Tulsi-Ramprashad looks on as Acting High Commissioner Ms Urvashi Ramnarine receives a traditional greeting from Mr Fidel Persaud, **2)** A cross section of the attendees to the Rameshwaram Mandir UK Diwali Celebrations, **3)** Isha Persaud Dancer, **4&5)** The Children of Rameshwaram Mandir performing a Diwali Skit portraying the Samudra Manthan, **Photos courtesy Rameshwaram Mandir UK**

On Sunday, 20 October 2024, the Rameshwaram Mandir UK held its first Grand Diwali Celebrations, at Yeading Community Centre, marking a significant milestone for the organisation. The event highlighted the vibrant traditions of Diwali with Lakshmi Puja, devotional songs, dance performances, a special Diwali skit, and the lighting of deeyas.

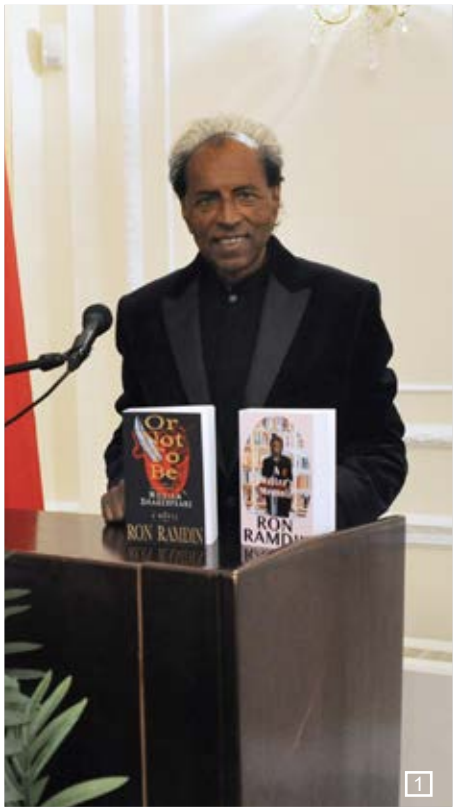
The High Commission for the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago was honoured to be part of these celebrations, with Acting High Commissioner Ms Urvashi Ramnarine and Ms Carol Valentine-Heath, Security Attaché in attendence. The High Commission is committed to maintaining close ties with the Trinidad and Tobago diaspora and is always eager to support cultural and religious events that reflect our rich heritage.

Special thanks to Pundit Rajneesh Tulsi-Ramprashad, from Trinidad and Tobago for leading the proceedings. His efforts, along with the contributions of the Rameshwaram Hindu, Social and Cultural Organization, played a key role in making this event a success. The event not only offered a spiritual experience but also provided a platform for Trinidad and Tobago and West Indian Hindus to connect, worship, and celebrate together.

Appreciation was extended to all attendees and contributors who helped make the 2024 Diwali celebrations a memorable occasion.

Stay connected with the High Commission as we continue to support our community in preserving and promoting our cultural and religious traditions in the UK.

RON RAMDIN'S THE BRITISH LIBRARY: A WRITER'S MEMOIR



Pictured: 1) Ron Ramdin with his books *OR NOT TO BE: The True Story of William Shakespeare* and *The British Library: A Writer's Memoir*, **2)** Mr Raymond Butler delivering the opening address**, 3&4)** Attendees who raised points during the Question and Answer segment of the Book Launch, **5)** Ron Ramdin signs copies of his book, **6)** Mrs Beverley Awonaya, Public Affairs Culture and Tourism and author Ron Ramdin.

Submitted by **RON RAMDIN**

Ron Ramdin's *The British Library: A Writer's Memoir* was launched at the Trinidad and Tobago High Commission on 30th October. The event was indeed a triumph.

In his 'Biographical Summary' Raymond Butler of the High Commission, opened by saying that 'Ron Ramdin's life is no ordinary story. He was born in Trinidad. and emigrted to England at the age 19 his first job was in a Library; thereafter he spent his working life in three of Britain's greatest libraries, including the British Library. His ambition to become a Writer has been a huge undertaking; and as he wrote and published books, over the years, he lectured in Universities not only across Britain, but internationally, including the University of the Sorbonne in Paris, the University of Seville in Spain and attended many International Conferences. He has given numerous

radio and television interviews in Britain and the Caribbean and appeared often On-Camera, notably as an Historian in the double award winning film The *Unknown Soldiers*. He has been elected a Fellow of the Royal Historical Society and a Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts and a recipient of a few Awards including the 'Outstanding Achievement Award' from the Trinidad and Tobago High Commission in London.'

Given the scope and depth of Ron Ramdin's work, his writings have explored cultures and social tensions, historical and contemporary as they relate to self-discovery (essentially, respect for difference) where and what is home?'

Ramdin's novel *Rama's Voyage* is a compelling read, the prestigious *Trinidad Sunday Guardian* Book Review stated:

"The novel opens up like a painting where each character reveals a story in its own right, yet each is used to cement a powerful story. It is like a tapestry where all the threads are woven only to finally form the finished product…The characters are so well co-ordinated that it is like an orchestra using all its players to perform a piece of great music." '

THE CULTURE & CUISINE OF TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO SHOWCASED AT COMMONWEALTH FAIR 2024

Pictured: 1) (L-R) Mrs. Beverley Awonaya, Ms Ameena Tenny, Ms. Rhonda Cox and Ms Dawn Elie-Forde, Secretary to the High Commissioner selling food and drinks to patrons, **2)** Mrs. Donna Philip-Forde carries the national flag of Trinidad and Tobago during the flag procession at the opening cermony. **3)** dancers from Muraldo DC, **4)** Mrs. Anastasia Dhanpaul and relatives, **5)** Pannist Dexter Marchan, **6)** Acting High Commissioner Ms Urvashi Ramnarine serving food to patrons, **7)** Ms Carol Valentine-Heath, Security Attaché serves roti and curry to patrons. **8)** Mr Michael Graham serving sorrel to a patron, **9)** A national purchases a number of Shandy Carib Sorrel supplied by Carib Brewery.

The Commonwealth Countries League Fair 2024 took place on Saturday, 16 November, at the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea Town Hall, London.

Trinidad and Tobago joined other countries of the Commonwealth to display and sell products to raise funds for the Commonwealth Girls Education Fund.

The Commonwealth Girls Education Fund provides financial assistance and other support to enable girls throughout the Commonwealth to access secondary education and improve their life chances.

The diversity of the Commonwealth was on full display, with a steady stream of people throughout the day. This year's event was hosted by the United Kingdom.

Visitors to the booth experienced a culinary offering that reflected the rich cultural heritage of Trinidad and Tobago. Visitors were offered vegetable, chicken, and goat roti with mango amchar, pelau with coleslaw, black cake, pepper sauce, green seasoning, and alcoholic and non-alcoholic drinks including rum punch, fruit punch, sorrel, Solo Beverages and Shandy Carib supplied by Carib. A selection of Angostura Limited products were also on sale, including Angostura 1919, Tamboo, Angostura Reserva rum, and Angostura bitters.

Entertainment on the day included dancing by Muraldo DC and Dexter Marchan, Panist.

The High Commission thanks Novo Farms Limited for a selection of Life Novo products, Riley's Tropical Food for a selection of spices from Karibbean Flavours, KC Confectionery, Craftworks, and Carib Brewery Limited, Angostura Limited, Ministry of Tourism, Culture and the Arts Trinidad & Tobago, and Tobago House of Assembly for their kind donations and unwavering support.

At left: (L-R) Ms Bethan Jinkinson, Executive Editor, BBC Ideas, Ms Duchess Williams – Alonga, President, CCL, Neena Dugal, Chairwoman trustee, CCL, Dr. Michael Leary, Executive Director, Christian Embassy London, Mayor of Kensington and Chelsea, Cllr Will Lane.

A MISSA BREVIS, BY DOMINIQUE LE GENDRE COMMISSIONED BY CANTERBURY CATHEDRAL

Submitted by **DOMINIQUE LE GENDRE**

Composer Dominique Le Gendre, from Trinidad and Tobago, was this year commissioned by Canterbury Cathedral to compose a Missa Brevis. The Mass, with the latin text, was sung on 17 November 2024 at the Cathedral. The commission has been supported by American patrons and friends of Canterbury Cathedral and dedicated to the sister of the patrons, Ann Blyberg, in honour of her lifelong devotion to upholding human rights. When asked to consider a title for the mass, Dominique sought the guidance of a dear friend Margo Picken, whose life has been equally devoted to upholding human rights and whose close and long friendship with Ann was seeded from their early days of establishing the offices of Amnesty International at the United Nations headquarters in New York.

Picutred: Dominique Le Gendre

Dominique was looking for a title that would embrace the defining character of Ann's dedication to human rights alongside that of thousands of people whose quiet work and lives, uphold the very best of human values. Inspiration was to be found in Pope Francis' second encyclical, Laudato Si that Margo Picken strongly recommended.

The pope's letter is a timely and detailed reminder, transcending faith denominations, of how to care for our environment, our communities, our fellow human beings and all creatures. In Laudato Si, Dominique finds renewed hope. By considering the questions that have been confronted by all religions and beliefs over millennia, and the profound reflections and thoughts offered, there is no shortage of guidance for those of us who seek to embody the best of all human values.

The mass is titled, Missa Brevis, I*n praise of the unsung who quietly labour for the good of all Creatures, Humankind and our planet Earth.*

FROM CALYPSO SINGER TO BROADWAY AND BEYOND: MELANIE LA BARRIE'S THEATRICAL ODYSSEY

At Left: Melanie La Barrie in the role of 'Hermes' in the theatre show HadesTown. **Photo: HadesTown**, **Above:** Melanie La Barrie then Melanie Hudson's vinyl LP album cover for *Coming Out* - 1992. **discogs.com**

Ms. Melanie La Barrie's journey from a calypso singer, formerly known as Melanie Hudson, in Trinidad and Tobago to her current role as Hermes in the West End premiere of Hadestown is a captivating tale of resilience and authenticity. Born in Trinidad and Tobago, Ms. La Barrie initially found fame as a calypso singer before catching the attention of Christopher Rodriguez, who was casting actors for the London production of Clear Water. Little did she know that what began as a brief stint in London would transform into a more than two-decade-long career in the heart of the West End.

Choosing a less conventional path, La Barrie navigated the challenges of the musical theatre world without going through the traditional route of drama school. Her unique voice and storytelling abilities earned her a place in various productions, with her first significant musical role in Ragtime. From there, she seamlessly transitioned into notable roles like Madame Morrible in Wicked and Mrs. Phelps in Matilda, showcasing her versatility and leaving an indelible mark on the West End stage.

Beyond her achievements on stage, Ms. La Barrie has been an active advocate for her fellow actors. Serving as the Equity Deputy for the stage actors' union in the UK, she played a crucial role in representing the interests of her colleagues. During the challenging times brought about by the pandemic, La Barrie worked tirelessly to boost morale and negotiate with producers to facilitate the return of live shows, demonstrating her commitment to the wellbeing of the theatre community.

Her Broadway debut at the age of 48

marked a significant milestone in her career, and as she bid farewell to her role as Nurse Angélique in & Juliet, she reflected on the deep connections formed during the production, particularly with co-star Paulo Szot. The bittersweet farewell only fueled her determination to continue embracing life as an adventure.

In her role as Hermes in Hadestown, Ms. La Barrie stands at the threshold of yet another exciting chapter in her career. Her ability to say 'yes' to opportunities, coupled with her unwavering commitment to storytelling, has solidified her as a respected figure in the global theatre community. From her roots in Trinidad to her impactful presence in the United Kingdom, Ms. La Barrie's journey is a testament to the power of talent, resilience, and staying true to one's authentic self.

In bidding adieu to & Juliet, Ms. Melanie La Barrie leaves behind a legacy on Broadway, and her role in Hadestown is another jewel in the crown of her remarkable career. Her story inspires aspiring artists to embrace their unique journey and celebrate the richness that authenticity brings to the stage.

Edited from https://www.leedsbeckett.ac.uk/news/2022/11/phd-students-landmark-sculpture-installed-at-leeds-beckett-university/

Pictured: Alfred 'Freddie' Totesaut giving his speech after winning the Hall of Fame Lifetime Achievement Award at the British Association of Steelbands 2011 Awards. **Photo: Media Association of Trinidad and Tobago**

BRENT STEEL PAN MASTER ALFRED TOTESAUT (1941 - 2024)

edited from **NATHALIE RAFFRAY | BRENT BOROUGH TIMES**

Alfred Totesaut, known as Freddie, died on 24 March 2024 at the age of 83. He was a renowned steel pan musician, tuner, and arranger who dedicated more than 50 years to the art form, influencing generations of musicians in the UK and beyond.

Born in Trinidad in 1940, Totesaut began playing pan as a child with the Mexitones before forming his own band, Dixie Harps. He later joined Dixieland Steel Orchestra, which won the Trinidad Steel Band Music Festival in 1960 and became the first steel band to tour extensively across Europe. In 1961, he moved to England, where he continued to perform, record, and promote steel pan music.

Totesaut played with Les Flambeaux, a steel band that performed at venues such as the Royal Albert Hall, the Savoy Hotel, and Ronnie Scott's Jazz Club. He appeared in films, television, and radio, and was one of the first steel pan musicians to perform in Africa. From the 1970s, he recorded with artists including Boney M, Fleetwood Mac, and Wham! and performed on *Top of the Pops*.

As a musician and arranger, Totesaut worked with several bands, including Metronomes Steel Orchestra, which won multiple awards under his leadership. In 1979, he performed for the then Prince Charles and once gave George Michael a steel pan lesson.

In Brent, he became known for his work with St Michael and All Angels Steel Orchestra, which was founded in 1996. He spent 16 years mentoring young musicians through the St Michael Youth Project, teaching a repertoire that ranged from classical composers like Mozart and Beethoven to Caribbean and contemporary music. Under his guidance, St Michael and All Angels became the first Brent steel band to perform at Notting Hill Carnival in 2009 and later won Best Band in 2016.

Totesaut's legacy in steel pan and music education remains influential. A tribute performance was held at the Royal Albert Hall on 13 April. His family is fundraising in his name for Barnardo's, with donations accepted at www.alfredtotesaut.muchloved.com.

Edited from https://www.times-series.co.uk/localadvertisers/shopping/24242146.obituary-brent-steel-pan-master-alfred-totesaut-dies-aged-83/

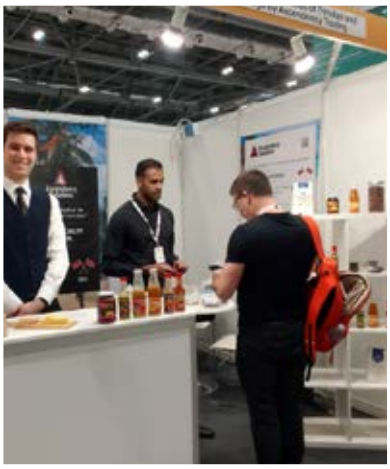
Top: Summer 1971: Les Flambeaux Steel Orchestra formerly Dixieland (Back, L-R): Fred Totesaut, Peter Joseph, Willie Francis, Peter Duprey Front: Trevor Cumberbatch, Miguel Barradas, Frank Ince. **Above:** Alfred 'Freddie' Totesaut (center) St. Michael and All Angels Steel Orchestra at Notting Hill Carnival 2010. **Photos: alfredtotesaut.com**

A TASTE OF TRINIDAD: NOVO FARMS & ASCENDANCY SOLUTIONS AT IFE 2024

At the event, Novo Farms Limited showcased its range of locally manufactured products at their booth located in the International Pavilion. Visitors had the opportunity to sample award-winning items such as instant corn soup, tomato choka, dhal, and callaloo. Meanwhile, Ascendancy Solutions presented products from the companies they represent, including Blue Waters, Matouks, and SM Jaleel.

IFE stands as the UK's largest event for product sourcing across various sectors such as retail, foodservice, hospitality, wholesale, distribution, import, and export. With over 40 years of history, the event serves as a platform for fostering effective business connections and partnerships.

Notably, Novo Farms Ltd made waves in November of the previous year when it debuted at Grocery Innovations Canada. Their Instant Pumpkin Stew earned them the Most Convenient Product award, impressing judges with its exceptional flavor, texture, and ease of preparation. This recognition catapulted Novo Farms into the prestigious TOP 10 in Grocery Innovation for 2023.



Top left: (L-R) Representatives from Novo Farms Limited at their booth showcasing their various products**. Photos: Novo Farms Limited. Top right:** Representatives from Ascendancy Solutions showcasing a range of products from the Trinidad and Tobago companies they represent at their booth, **Photo: Adanna Taylor, Above: (L-R)** High Commissioner Vishnu Dhanpaul, Mrs. Adanna Taylor, Commercial Officer, Ms. Urvashi Ramnarine, Minister Counsellor, Mr. Glen Ramdhani, Chairman of Novo International Ltd and Mr. Chevon Wilson, CEO of Novo Life during a courtesy call.

FINTECH ENTREPRENEURS FROM TT VISIT UK

The United Kingdom Trade Partnerships (UKTP) tech startup project organised a week-long business prospecting mission to the UK, bringing together startups from Barbados and Trinidad and Tobago. The primary objective was to assist these startups in exploring the UK market and establishing relevant business connections.

On the first day, the startups had the opportunity to meet with Mrs. Michele Davidson-Jones, Head of Entrepreneurship at the Global Entrepreneur Programme within the Department for Business and Trade. They also engaged with Mr. Tony Hughes, Co-founder at Locate Markets and Curator Technologies, who provided valuable

Pictured: High Commissioner Vishnu Dhanpaul, Mr. Henry Mungalsingh, Mrs. Adanna Taylor, Commercial Officer, Mr. Jarryon Paul, Founder/ CEO of Sunshine Exhcnage , Mr Kevin Blake-Thomas, Co-Founder/CEO of Tychon, Mr. Ian T. Alleyne, Founder of PayWise Limited, Ms. Haifa Ben Salem, Associate Programme Officer, United Nations ITC, Mrs. Irvashi Ramnarine, Minister Counsellor.

insights into the UK's Global Entrepreneurship Programme, which serves as a launchpad for innovative startups looking to enter the UK market.

The focus shifted to fintech entrepreneurship on the second day, with visits to Plexal and Here East. Mrs. Jessica Moffatt-Owen, Innovation Lead at Plexal, and Mr. Andy Ayim MBE, from Angel Investing School, conducted a masterclass on navigating the UK investor ecosystem, offering invaluable insights to the startups.

Day two also included meetings with Mr. David Butcher from London and Partners, where the startups learned more about the services available to help businesses scale. Additionally, the startups participated in individually crafted B2B meetings tailored to their specific needs.

On the final day of the mission, the startups paid a courtesy visit to His Excellency Mr. Vishnu Dhanpaul, where they also had the opportunity to meet with Mrs. Urvashi Ramnarine, Minister Counsellor, and Mrs. Adanna K. Taylor, Commercial Officer. During the meeting, the diplomats expressed keen interest in the startups' endeavors and offered their support.

UKTP project implemented by the International Trade Centre (ITC), aims to increase trade from African, Caribbean, and Pacific countries to the UK and the European Union.

Edited from https://bit.ly/3xLkXIr

BECOMING UK-MARKET READY WEBINAR SERIES

The Commercial Office executed a series of three webinars in July 2024 under the overall theme of "Becoming UK-Market Ready". The webinars were designed to equip exporters from Trinidad and Tobago with the information required to ensure a successful entry into the UK Market. Delivered by UK Food Industry Consultant Jane Milton, topics included packaging and labelling requirements, shipping considerations, warehousing and distribution and trade show participation. On average around 30 companies were represented at each of the webinars.

Screenshot: The Webinar Session 3: Maximizing Trade Show Participation in the UK and EU Webinar featured Jane Milton, Food Industry Expert and Laura Strapp, Head of Buying for Cotswold Fayre.

LONDON TECH WEEK 2024

London Tech Week is an annual event that showcases tech innovation and success in Europe's leading technology hub, with global leaders sharing expertise and knowledge over several days. Last year's event took place at the London Olympia from 10-12 June 2024. Trinidad and Tobago was represented by Nishal Nagassar of the Investment Arm of the Trinidad and Tobago Trade and Investment Promotion Agency and Adanna K. Taylor, Commercial Officer at the High Commission, who both took advantage of the opportunity to raise the awareness of Trinidad and Tobago as a key investment destination. They also met with tech leaders from across Europe interested in new tech ventures and in sharing new tech innovations.

Pictured: Mr Nishal Nagassar Vice President (Ag.) Investments and Ms Adanna K. Taylor, Commercial Officer. **Photo: InvesTT**

SALON INTERNATIONAL DE L'ALIMENTATION (SIAL) PARIS SPECIALTY FOOD SHOW

At SIAL Paris, the "Absolutely Caribbean" Pavilion showcased three remarkable brands from Trinidad and Tobago alongside 22 brands from Barbados, Saint Lucia, Haiti and Cuba. With the support of Caribbean Export and the European Union, products from Novo Farms, RHS Limited and Matouk's were on display to thousands of global buyers, distributors and producers for potential partnerships. With the increasing demand for innovative, organic and eco-conscious products, companies from Trinidad and Tobago are ready and eager to satisfy hungry markets.

At left: Ms Adanna Taylor, Commercial Officer and Ms Mandisa Granderson, Manager of Client Services at exporTT at Stand K093, Paris Nord Villepinte, France. **Above:** A selection of products from Novo Farms and RHS Limited on display.

UK-TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO TRADE AND INVESTMENT ROUNDTABLE

Pictured: 1) Mr Sekou Alleyne, Head of Investment Division at the Trinidad and Tobago Trade and Investment Promotion Agency (TTTIPA) delivers a presentation on investment opportunities, **2) (L-R)** (seated) H.E. Vishnu Dhanpaul, and Mr Sekou Alleyne, **3&4)** Investors who raised points during the Question and Answer segment of the Roundtable, **5)** Ms Adanna Taylor, Commercial Officer, H.E. Harriet Cross, British High Commissioner to Trinidad and Tobago, H.E. Vishnu Dhanpaul, Ms Leeooi-Oneika Howard, Senior Trade and Investment, UK Department for Business and Trade, Ms Gisselle Roberts, Country Director - UK Department for Business and Trade, Mr Sekou Alleyne, Head of the Investment Division, TTTIPA

The UK-Trinidad and Tobago Trade and Investment Roundtable was held on Tuesday, 5 November 2024, at the Trinidad and Tobago High Commission in London. Organised in collaboration with DMA Invest, an international development consultancy firm, and the Commercial Office of the High Commission for the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago to the United Kingdom, the event highlighted key investment opportunities in Trinidad and Tobago across three priority sectors: Manufacturing, Maritime and Logistics, and Renewable Energy.

Approximately 40 UK investors attended the roundtable, which featured presentations from Mr. Sekou Alleyne, Investment Lead at the Trinidad and Tobago Trade and Investment Promotion Agency. Discussions focused on various opportunities, including the newly enacted Special Economic Zone regime, existing Industrial Parks, and the overall investment-friendly environment in Trinidad and Tobago.

T&T HIGHLIGHTS KEY INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES AT UK-CARIBBEAN TRADE FORUM

Pictured: 1) (Far right) Mr Sekou Alleyne, Head of Investment Division, TTTIPA on Core Infrastructure Port, Harbour and Airport Development panel at UK-Caribbean Trade Forum hosted by DMA, **2)** (Second from left) Dr. Maryam Abdool-Richards, Chairperson of the National Insurance Property Development Company Limited (NIPDEC), alongside (sixth from left) Mr. Alston Fournillier, Deputy Chairman of the Water and Sewerage Authority (WASA) on the Sustainable Infrastructure, Renewables and Water panel at UK-Caribbean Trade Forum hosted by DMA, **2)** Ms Adanna K. Taylor and Mr Sekou Alleyne speaks with attendee, **3)** (L-R) Mr Sekou Alleyne, Head of Investment Division, TTTIPA; H.E. Harriet Cross, British High Commissioner to Trinidad and Tobago; Ms Beverley Awonaya, Public Affairs, Culture, and Tourism; Dr. Maryam Abdool-Richards, Chairperson of NIPDEC; and Mr Lawson Lovell, Public Affairs, Culture, and Tourism. **4)** (fifth from left) Mr Sekou Alleyne and Ms Adanna K. Taylor at the roundtable hosted by the UK Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office and supported by DMA Invest and UK Export Finance.

On Wednesday 6 November 2024, at the UK-Caribbean Trade and Investment Forum hosted by DMA Invest in partnership with UK Export Finance and HM Government, Mr Sekou Alleyne, Head of the Investment Division at the Trinidad and Tobago Trade and Investment Promotion Agency, participated in a panel on Core Infrastructure – Port, Harbour, and Airport Development. He spoke alongside representatives from KPMG, UK Export Finance, the Jamaica Special Economic Zone Authority, and the Department for Business and Trade.

In his remarks, Mr Alleyne highlighted the expansion of ANR Robinson Airport in Tobago, planned upgrades for Piarco International Airport, and the recently signed MOU between the Ministry of Finance and UK Export Finance. This MOU aims to support Trinidad and Tobago's national development objectives and provides a financing avenue for projects in national security, healthcare infrastructure, airport development, bridges, and road rehabilitation, among other areas. UK Export Finance has the capacity to support up to £5 billion in financing for projects in Trinidad and Tobago.

Pictured: Cross section of the Roundtable hosted by the UK Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office, in partnership with DMA Invest and UK Export Finance

Dr. Maryam Abdool-Richards, Chairperson of National Insurance Property Development Company Limited (NIPDEC), also participated in a panel with Mr. Alston Fournillier, Deputy Chairman of the Water and Sewerage Authority (WASA). Together, they discussed the importance of strategic partnerships for improving water, sanitation, and public infrastructure, emphasising sustainable development goals for Trinidad and Tobago.

On Thursday 7 November, Ms Adanna K. Taylor, Commercial Officer at the High Commission, joined Sekou at a roundtable discussion on investment opportunities in ports and airports. The event was hosted by the UK Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office and supported by DMA Invest and UK Export Finance.

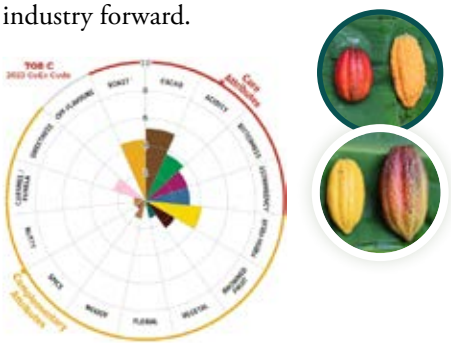
SWEET SUCCESS: TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO COCOA FARMERS EARN INTERNATIONAL RECOGNITION

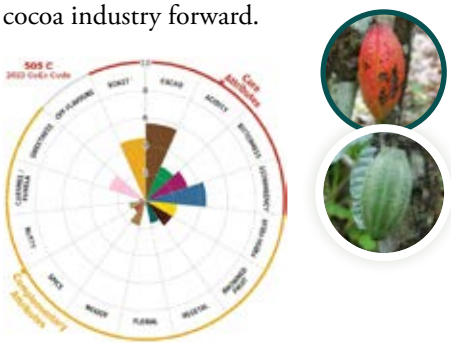
Trinidad and Tobago's cocoa industry continues to earn accolades on the global stage, with local farmers distinguishing themselves among the world's finest. At the 2023 Cacao of Excellence Awards in Amsterdam on 8 February 2024, Mr. Shankar Teelucksingh of Granville, Ms. Doolarie Ramdath of Rio Claro, and Ms. Stephanie Omardeen of Brasso Seco each received silver awards in the Central America and Caribbean category. The ceremony, held at the Beurs Van Berlage during the Amsterdam Cocoa and Chocolate Week, showcased the quality, flavor, and diversity of cocoa beans from around the world.

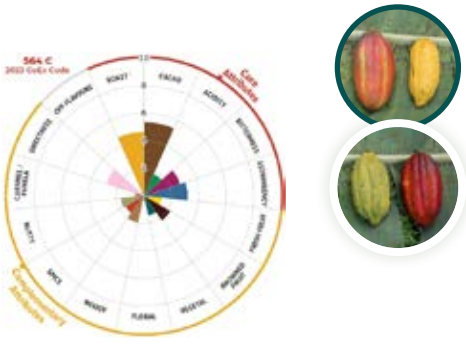
Mr. Shankar Teelucksingh, based in Cedros, comes from a family legacy of cocoa farming and has revitalized his great grandparents' estate to produce award-winning beans. His dedication to preserving his family's heritage while embracing innovation has resulted in a thriving cocoa enterprise. Mr. Teelucksingh's beans were described by the Cacao of Excellence as possessing a complex flavor profile, with robust cacao notes complemented by creamy caramel touches and subtle acidity, all leading to a lingering woody aftertaste. His plans to expand production and explore new cocoa products for both local and international markets reflect his commitment to driving the Trinidad and Tobago cocoa industry forward.

Ms. Doolarie Ramdath, based in Ecclesville, Rio Claro, has been involved in cocoa farming for seven years, carrying on the tradition passed down from her father. Her estate not only produces cocoa beans but also traditional drinking chocolates and is experimenting with cocoa wine and chocolate bars. Ms. Ramdath's cocoa beans were praised for their smooth texture and moderate acidity, with hints of fresh grapefruit and tropical fruits transitioning to deeper notes of raisins and dried apricots, all supported by a solid cacao base. Her dedication to improving her products and exploring new avenues for cocoa consumption highlights the innovative spirit driving Trinidad and Tobago's cocoa industry forward.

Ms. Stephanie Omardeen, along with her son Javed, operates Omarbeans Organics in Brasso Seco, Paria, focusing on sustainable farming practices. Their estate produces a variety of cocoa products, including nibs, powder, and flavored chocolates, with plans to increase production and quality. Ms. Omardeen's chocolate, described as bright and clean with hints of fresh fruits and a chocolatey finish, represents the excellence of Trinidadian cocoa on the global stage. Her commitment to sustainable farming and producing high-quality cocoa products showcases the potential for Trinidad and Tobago to become a leader in the cocoa industry.







Above: (L-R) Flavour profile for Mr. Shankar Teelucksingh, Ms. Doolarie Ramdath and Ms. Stephanie Omardeen cocoa bean sample, as assessed by the Cacao of Excellence.
Photos: Cocoa Development Company of Trinidad and Tobago

Edited from https://www.facebook.com/cocoadevelopmentcompanytt

TEAM TOBAGO RETURNS TO ITB BERLIN 2024

Team Tobago participated in Internationale Tourismus-Börse Berlin (ITB Berlin), the world's largest tourism trade fair that took place from 5-7 March in Berlin, Germany. Representatives from the Tobago Tourism Agency Limited (TTAL) engaged with a wide array of stakeholders from the global tourism industry. Representatives from the Tobago Tourism Agency Limited (TTAL) engaged with a wide array of stakeholders from the global tourism industry, including potential business partners and travel media from the German market. Their primary objective was to showcase the unique offerings of Tobago through the Tobago Beyond campaign and establish new partnerships to enhance the island's appeal as a top destination for European travellers.

During the event, the TTAL team focused on various key areas such as increasing airlift, boosting bookings, enhancing accommodation options, and promoting sustainable travel practices in Tobago. By addressing these areas, they aimed to elevate Tobago's tourism products and attractiveness in the German market, ultimately driving growth in visitor arrivals and enhancing the overall tourism experience on the island.

Edited from https://www.facebook.com/ttaltobago

Above: 1) Trinidad and Tobago flag raised outside ITB Berlin at the Berlin Exhibition Grounds, **2)** Representatives from Tobago Tourism Agency Limited and other stakeholders in front of the Tobago booth at ITB Berlin, **3)** Representatives from the Tobago Tourism Agency Limited meeting with representatives from a German travel agencies and comparison platform, **4)** Councillor Tashia Grace Burris, Tobago House of Assembly and Mr. Sean Mc Coon, Environment Tobago Manager chat with travel consultant Ms. Shae Lucabaugh. **Photos: Tobago Tourism Agency Limited**

THE QUEEN'S HALL AUDITORIUM OFFICIALLY NAMED THE WINIFRED ATWELL AUDITORIUM

The Queen's Hall Auditorium was officially named The Winifred Atwell Auditorium at a ceremony held on Monday 23 September 2024. On Thursday 22 August 2024, the Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago approved the naming of the Queen's Hall Auditorium in honour of this renowned local pianist.

Atwell, who was born and raised in

Above: A dedication plaque unveiled at the Winifred Atwell Auditorium **At left:** Piano once owned by Winifred Atwell on display in the auditorium naming Ceremony in Queen's Hall. **Photo: OPM**

Tunapuna, enjoyed great popularity in Britain and Australia from the 1950s with a series of boogie-woogie and ragtime hits, selling over 20 million records. Born on 27 April 1915 (according to her Trinidad and Tobago Birth Certificate), Atwell was also known as Una Winifred Atwell and internationally as Winifred Atwell or "The Amazing Miss A".

It was her mother who engaged her in music, as she received her first formal piano lesson when she was two and a half years old. She began playing the piano at the age of four and within a couple of years she was giving recitals of Chopin at charity concerts. At age six, she gave piano lessons. At eight years old, she was the official organist at St Charles' Roman Catholic Church in Tunapuna.

As a young woman she worked in her father's chemist shop, and he insisted that she took a degree in pharmacy. However, in her spare time she entertained friends and continued to take part in charity concerts.

After performing in Trinidad's Services Club during World War II, Atwell went to New York to study piano technique with the celebrated classical pianist Alexander Borovsky. In 1946 she came to Britain, determined to become a concert pianist, and studied at the Royal Academy of Music. She supported herself by working in the evenings playing the piano in dance halls and clubs.

Atwell's breakthrough came in 1948 at a charity concert at the London Casino. There, she captivated the audience with her ragtime music and took several curtain calls. In 1951 she signed a contract with Decca, and in 1952 she appeared in the first Royal Variety Performance for the new queen, Elizabeth II. Atwell closed her act with 'Britannia Rag', a number she had composed specially for the occasion, and which reached Number Five in the pop charts.

By 1954, she become the first recording-artist from Britain to have three hits selling one million records: 'Black and White Rag' (1952), 'Let's Have a Party' (1953), and 'Let's Have Another Party' (1954). Between 1952 and 1960 she had no less than eleven top ten hits and at the end of the 20th century she was recognised as the most successful female instrumentalist ever to have featured in the British pop charts.

Despite her success with ragtime music, she never lost sight of her initial desire to become a concert pianist. In 1954, her recording of the eighteenth variation from Rachmaninov's Rhapsody on a Theme of Paganini reached Number Nine in the pop charts. On November 28 of that same year, Atwell packed the Royal Albert Hall as a soloist, accompanied by the London Philharmonic Orchestra, playing Grieg's piano concerto and George Gershwin's 'Rhapsody in Blue.' Atwell died in Sydney on 27 February 1983.

Edited from https://www.facebook.com/queens.hall.3/posts/the-queens-hall-auditorium-was-officially-named-the-winifred-atwell-auditorium-a/1155864743206333

Pictured: Prime Minister of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, Dr. the Honourable Keith Rowley, at the dedication of the auditorium and unveiling of the commemorative plaque on Monday, 23 September 2024. Also present were, Members of Parliament, Dr. Helmer Hilwig, Chairman of Queen's Hall (back row, third from left), Directors of the Board of Queen's Hall, and members of the Atwell family. **Photos: Queen's Hall**

T&T RECOGNISED AMONG TOP DESTINATIONS FOR 2025 BY LONELY PLANET AT WORLD TRAVEL MARKET

Trinidad and Tobago has been honoured among the 10 best countries to visit in 2025 by Lonely Planet at the 2024 World Travel Market (WTM) in London. This recognition reinforces the country's status as a premier destination for travellers seeking authentic and unforgettable experiences.

Pictured: Trinidad and Tobago Named a Top 10 Travel Destination for 2025 by Lonely Planet. **Photo: www.lonelyplanet.com/best-in-travel**

Known around the world for its unique insights on authentic getaways, Lonely Planet's Best in Travel list celebrates 30 incredible destinations to visit for 2025. In the top 10 countries category, Trinidad and Tobago has been recognised among the likes of Fiji, Cameroon, Paraguay, and Lithuania, with prominent features of Pigeon Point Beach, Little Tobago, Pirate's Bay, Corbin Local Wildlife Park, and Fort King in Tobago. As the only Caribbean country to make the list, this achievement has strengthened the country's appeal as a desirable destination in the region, with Lonely Planet's Best in Travel featured in several other major publications including CNN and The New York Post.

Pictured: (L-R) Ms Emily Huff, Director of Partnerships, Lonely Planet, the Honourable Farley Augustine Chief Secretary of the Tobago House of Assembly, Mr Tony Hall, Vice President, Lonely Planet, Senator the Honourable Randall Mitchell, Minister of Tourism, Culture and the Arts, Councillor Tashia Burris, Secretary of Tourism, Culture, Antiquities and Transportation; Mr. Alpha Lorde, Board Director, Tobago Tourism Agency Limited (TTAL) during the presentation of the Lonely Planet Best in Travel for 2025 award at the WTM 2024. **Photo: Tobago Tourism Agency**

Senator the Honourable Randall Mitchell, Minister of Tourism, Culture and the Arts, the Honourable Farley Augustine, Chief Secretary of the Tobago House of Assembly and Councillor Tashia Burris, Secretary of Tourism, Culture, Antiquities and Transportation, had the pleasure of receiving the award from Lonely Planet's Vice President Mr Tom Hall and Senior Director of Partnerships, Ms Emily Huff, during this year's WTM in London, where thousands of tourism industry professionals gathered to network, build partnerships and showcase the latest global trends and offerings.

Edited from https://tobagobeyond.com/news/trinidad-and-tobago-honoured-one-best-countries-visit-2025-lonely-planet-years-world-travel-market

TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO ADVOCATES FOR A FAIR CLIMATE TRANSITION AT COP29

Trinidad and Tobago participated in the 29th session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP29), which commenced on 11 November 2024 in Baku, Azerbaijan. The delegation highlighted the country's commitment to a greener and more inclusive society, reinforcing its role in global climate negotiations.

Pictured: His Excellency Vishnu Dhanpaul, (back row, second from right), Mr. Kishan Kumarsingh, Head of the Multilateral Environmental Agreements Unit, Ministry of Planning and Development and Ms Aarti Bedassie-Maharaj, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Planning and Development (front row, second from left) with Trinidad and Tobago delegation **Photo: Ministry of Planning and Development**

His Excellency Vishnu Dhanpaul, High Commissioner for Trinidad and Tobago to the United Kingdom, led the official delegation, which included the Ministry of Planning and Development. Mr. Kishan Kumarsingh, Head of the Multilateral Environmental Agreements Unit, served as Head of Delegation for Technical Negotiations. The contingent comprised representatives from the Ministry of Planning and Development, the Environmental Management Authority (EMA), the Ministry of Labour, the Ministry of Energy and Energy Industries, the Tobago House of Assembly, as well as non-government representatives from The Cropper Foundation, Climate Analytics, the University of the West Indies, and youth representatives.

At COP29, Mr. Kumarsingh led a side event titled *Just Resilience: Just Transitions Towards a More Equal and Climate-Driven Society*, supported by Climate Strategies and the Stockholm Environmental Institute (SEI). He highlighted the severe impacts of climate change on small island developing states, including

economic instability from drought-related crop failure, extreme weather events, biodiversity loss, and threats to the fisheries sector.

He underscored that Trinidad and Tobago's Just Transition Policy aims to accelerate socioeconomic growth by fostering a green economy, creating new employment opportunities, and promoting cleaner energy. "It is imperative that we build resilience for every woman, man, and child and leave no one behind," he stated.

The Honourable Pennelope Beckles, Minister of Planning and Development, reiterated Trinidad and Tobago's commitment to global climate discussions, aligning with the Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS) and the Group of 77 and China (G77 and China). She emphasised the need for increased ambition in limiting global temperature rise, addressing loss and damage, and ensuring accessible climate finance, technology transfer, and capacity building.

Edited from https://www.ttt.live/planning-ministry-pushes-for-fair-climate-transition-at-cop29/

Pictured: Mr. Kishan Kumarsingh leading an official COP29 side event. **Photo: Ministry of Planning and Development**

EVENTS ROUND UP

On 8 October 2024, the High Commission hosted an In Conversation with authors Lawrence Scott and Nicole-Rachelle Moore to mark the launch of *Memories, Musings and Unfinished Conversations*. Nicole shared the inspirations behind her debut polygenre book, which blends essays, poetry, and short stories exploring identity, memory, and belonging. Pictured: 1) Ms Beverley Awonaya delivers opening message, **2)** Ms Clary Salandy shared information about the Bocas Lit Fest UK/Madrid/Belfast Tour 2024, **3)** Authors Lawrence Scott and Nicole-Rachelle Moore, **4)** Nicole-Rachelle Moore and Mr. Eric Huntley, **5)** Lawrence Scott signing his book, '*Looking for Cazabon*' for an attendee.

On 18 October 2024, the High Commission hosted the launch of Mrs Allyson Williams MBE's autobiography, *Tell Me Something I Don't Know*. She shared her journey from Trinidad to London, overcoming racism and balancing midwifery with family life. Her story highlighted resilience, Caribbean values, and the power of perseverance, Pictured 1) Ms Marcia M Spence, Founder of Marcia M Publishing House Ltd, **2)** Blaze reads an excerpt from ***Tell Me Something I Don't Know***, (seated, from left), Blaze and Mrs Allyson Williams MBE,

3&4) Members of the audience who asked questions during the Q&A session, **5)** Attendees standing ovation for Mrs Allyson Williams MBE**, 6**) Mrs Allyson Williams MBE signs a copy of her autobiography for Ms Marcia Bartholomew.

On 22 October 2024, United Airlines hosted a Diversity Day at Heathrow for Black History Month 2024 co-arranged by Trinidad and Tobago national Ms Carlene Fahy. The High Commission supported the event with cultural materials, steelpan performers, and catering. Over 200 attended, celebrating diversity through music, food, and Trinidad and Tobago's rich cultural heritage. Pictured: 1) Display table featuring books, ornaments, and landscapes from Trinidad and Tobago at United Airlines Diversity Day. **2 & 3)** Attendees received books and tokens highlighting Trinidad and Tobago's culture.

The Pepper Pot Centre's annual Christmas party in December 2024 brought together members, friends, and special guests. The festive event featured music, dancing, food, and sometimes gifts. Supported by Global's Make Some Noise, the party helps combat loneliness and isolation each year. The High Commission donated a gift hamper featuring Trinidad and Tobago products. Pictured 1) Pepper Pot Carol Singers**, 2)** Mayor of the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea, Councillor Will Lane presenting a certificate of achievement to Mr Ferdinand Maxwell, **3)** A raffle winner,

4) Mr Rudolph Walker and guest, **5&6)** Attendees enjoying the festive Christmas dinner reception at the Pepper Pot Centre.

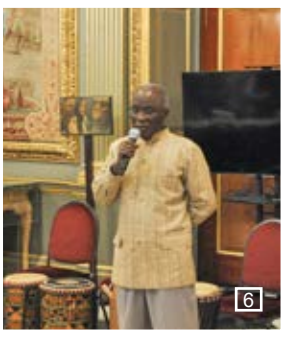
For further information on Pepperpot Centre please visit, www.pepperpotcentre.org.uk or call 020 8968 6940

HIGH COMMISSION'S PARTICIPATION IN COMMONWEALTH SECRETARIAT'S CULTURAL EVENT

The High Commission, London was invited to take part in the Commonwealth Secretariat's Cultural Event, which was held on 1 November 2024 at Marlborough House.

The High Commission provided Carnival and steelpan memorabilia items which included miniature steelpan and books on the steelpan including The Illustrated Story of Pan by Kim Johnson. The mas band Genesis based in the United Kingdom supported the event by providing two mas costumes entitled Tobago Love and Legacy.

Mrs Beverley Awonaya, Public Affairs, Culture and Tourism give a presentation on the history of the steelpan, the culture of Trinidad and Tobago, the significance of World Steelpan Day and Trinidad and Tobago's role in the Notting Hill Carnival. She also issued an invitation to all persons to visit Trinidad and Tobago to experience a true Trinbagonian Carnival.

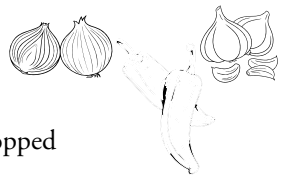


Pictured: 1) Mrs Beverley Awonaya delivering presentation on the history of the steelpan, the culture of Trinidad and Tobago to the attendees of the Commonwealth Secretariat's Cultural Day Celebrations, **2):** Mr Lawson Lovell and Mrs Beverley Awonaya, Public Affairs, Culture and Tourism, **3&4)** The High Commissions of Malawi and Ghana both presented on the rich history, heritage, and culture of their respective countries. **5)** Mr Wilfred T. Adderley II**,** Adviser/Asst. Secretary to the Governing Boards at the Commonwealth Secretariat**, 6)** Mr Akyaaba Addai-Sebo, Ghanaian activist and former Special Projects Coordinator for the Greater London Council, shared insights into his pivotal role in establishing Black History Month in the UK in 1987.

CHICKEN PELAU

Preparation
Prep Time: 15 mins | Cook Time: 30 mins | Serves 6-8

Ingredients:



- 1 3½ lb chicken, cut into pieces
- 4 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 onion sliced
- 2 pimento peppers, seeded and chopped
- 2 tbs green seasoning paste
- 1 tbs chopped celery leaves
- 1 tbs red wine vinegar
- ¼ cup French thyme
- 4 tbs tomato ketchup
- 1 tsp salt
- 2 tbs veg oil
- 2 tbs brown sugar
- 2 cups pigeon peas
- ½ cup chopped pumpkin
- 2 cups parboiled rice
- 1 cup coconut milk
- 2 cups water

Method:

1. Wash chicken well with lime, drain.
2. Rub on garlic, herb marinade, add fresh herbs, sliced onion and pepper, vinegar, black pepper and some salt, and ketchup cover and marinate for about 2 hours in the refrigerator.
3. Heat oil add sugar and caramelise to a dark brown colour, add chicken pieces one at a time turning well to colour each piece, add the rest of seasonings.
4. Cook uncovered until chicken starts to release its juices, about 5 minutes.
5. Add pigeon peas and pumpkin, stir. Lower heat and cook for about 10 minutes, covered.
6. Add rice and stir well.
7. Cover and simmer until cooked, about 20 to 30 minutes turning occasionally.
8. Adjust salt and serve

https://newsday.co.tt/2024/02/10/best-of-the-best-carnival-foods

SHARK AND BAKE

Preparation
Prep Time: 15 mins | Cook Time: 30 mins | Serves 4-8

Shark

Ingredients:

- Breaded shark
- 1 lb shark fillets,
- 1 tsp ground chives
- 1 tbs minced c hadon beni
- 2 clove garlic, minced
- juice of one lime
- salt and freshly ground black pepper
- flour to dredge fish
- vegetable oil for frying fish

Method:

1. Wash shark in flour, cut into 4-oz portions, season with herbs garlic and lime juice.
2. Season with salt and freshly ground black pepper to taste.
3. Marinate for 30 minutes.
4. Heat oil in frying pan, dredge fish in flour and fry until golden.
5. Drain and serve with floats.

Floats

Ingredients:

- 4 cups all -purpose flour
- 2 tsp yeast
- 1 tbs sugar
- 1 tbs shortening
- water
- vegetable oil for frying

Method:

1. Combine flour with salt, sugar and shortening. Rub in shortening until mixture resembled fine crumbs; add enough warm water to make a soft dough.
2. Knead for five minutes, form into a smooth ball, cover and rest for 30 minutes until doubled in size.
3. Form dough into 8 balls. Let rise again for 15 minutes.
4. Flatten balls into 4-inch rounds.
5. Heat oil in a deep skillet and deep fry floats until they actually float to the top of the oil. Turn and fry until golden. Drain and serve hot

https://newsday.co.tt/2024/02/10/best-of-the-best-carnival-foods

A PUBLICATION OF THE HIGH COMMISSION FOR THE REPUBLIC OF TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO, LONDON
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